

.TOWARDS INTEGRATION

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ESSAYS & ADDRESSES

• BY •

ROHIT MEHTA

Author of "Intuitive Philosophy", "The Play of the Infinite", "The New World of Socialism", etc.

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PUBLISHERS' NOTE

ROHIT MEHTA, General Secretary of the Theosophical Society in India, has already several books to his credit, the last two of which—*The Intuitive Philosophy* and *The Play of the Infinite*—together with the present volume may be said to constitute a trilogy of closely inter-related theme. That theme concerns a vision of life in its dual aspects as Immanence and Transcendence. In the first of these three books, he portrays his view of the New Man, the child of a new spiritual revolution, so sorely needed today to save a world that is distraught and distracted. In *The Play of the Infinite*, a sequel to the first volume, the author leads us to an understanding of the meaning and purpose of such a transformed life. In the present volume this vision is focussed on several problems with which a serious student is confronted today so that he may be enabled to perceive these problems from a new perspective.

This book is a collection of Rohit Mehta's essays and addresses. Most of the essays, which appeared originally as leading articles in *The Indian Theosophist*, are here reproduced slightly revised. The chapter entitled "Desirelessness" originally appeared in *The Theosophist*, the journal of the President of

The Theosophical Society, and it is reproduced here by courtesy of the T.P.H., Adyar, to whom our thanks are due. The Addresses are those delivered during the years specified as one of the principal lectures at the annual Conventions of The Theosophical Society, and subsequently published in *The Theosophist*. These essays and addresses are brought together here under one cover for the first time and published so that the inspiring message of the age old but ever-new philosophy of Intuition may reach a wider public than the one they were originally intended for.

Our sincere thanks are due to Pt. Ramachandra Shukla, M A., L.T., and Shri Keshavchandra Bhadbade, B Sc , B.T., for their valuable suggestions and help in reading the proofs.

—THE PUBLISHERS.

INTRODUCTION

THE ESSAYS published in this book under the general title *Towards Integration* deal with different aspects of man's psychological and spiritual life. The acute crisis through which the whole of humanity is passing today has its starting point in the psychological disintegration to which man has been subjected in this technological civilization of ours. There is no unifying factor holding different aspects of the human individual together with the result that man's psychological nature is experiencing a pull from a variety of sources. It is but obvious that the pressure of these different pulls is causing much strain and stress in the life of the human individual. All our efforts at establishing social unity through organizational or institutional changes are bound to prove futile because of the disunity which has been created in the psychological nature of man. Thus the present world-crisis is fundamentally psychological; and, therefore, it must be tackled at that level and not at the level of political, social or economic operations.

A spiritual man is *par excellence* an integrated individual meaning thereby an individual who has resolved his psychological conflicts and has therefore discovered a unifying factor within himself. His

actions emanate from this centre of unity and are therefore natural and spontaneous. Such an individual is indeed a great revolutionary force, for he does not operate on the plane of reactions. He is thus the starting point of a fundamental social transformation. The world is in need of such psychologically integrated individuals if our civilization is to know peace and happiness.

The central theme of these essays is: the problems created by the mind cannot be solved by the mind. The problems of disintegration with which humanity is faced today are rooted in the operations of the mind. Man's integration is possible only in the presence of *something* which transcends the Mind. It is the vision of that *something* which will bring a spiritual quality to man's every-day existence.

Banaras,
13th April 1954.

ROHIT MEHTA.

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1

FROM INTELLECT TO INTUITION

THE FIRST Object of the Theosophical Society draws our attention to the prime necessity of our civilization, which is The establishment of Right Relationship between individuals and groups of individuals. This has been termed the Universal Brotherhood of Humanity. The absence of this right relationship is to be perceived today in the numerous conflicts at various levels of human existence. They are to be seen both in the life of the individual as well as in the life of the collectivity.

Bertrand Russell, the great social thinker of our age, describes those conflicts as (a) conflict of man with Nature, (b) conflict of man with man, and (c) conflict of man with himself. With reference to these three conflicts it may be stated that man has

been trying to resolve his conflict with Nature through the instrumentality of science and technology. Due to the efforts carried on in the course of the last three centuries, Nature's energies have been to a very large extent harnessed to the needs of man. Nature, today, is made to yield more and more so that man may be happy in his physical environment. Man is active in perfecting his instruments whereby he can exercise greater and greater control over Nature.

When we come to the conflict between man and man, here too we see an earnest effort being made, through the establishment of better social organization, to arrive at a harmony between the individual and society. The development of various social ideologies of Communism—Socialism, International Co-operation, as represented by the United Nations, *Sarvodaya*, representing Gandhian ideology—indicates man's endeavor to bring into existence a new order of things at the national as well as the international levels. The idea of the Welfare State is also a move in that direction. In other words, man is trying to resolve the conflict with his fellow beings by creating better social, economic and political conditions.

It is with reference to man's conflict with himself that we have to admit that no serious effort has been made to resolve it. In fact man has not turned seriously to this question, and its non-resolution naturally affects the spheres of the other two

conflicts. Man continues to be at war with himself—nay, this war has been greatly intensified—and it is this which vitiates all that is being done in the technological and social spheres. The psychological conflicts of man strike at the very root of all the progress that we seem to be making in the scientific and social realms. The unresolved psychological conflict of man introduces many complications in his relationship with other human beings. Due to this conflict he looks at human relationship with a view to self fulfilment or self glorification. For this purpose he naturally uses whatever technological skill he possesses or whatever social, economic and political authority he wields. Thus technological and social instruments are being used by man for self-fulfilment due to the non resolution of the conflict which rages within himself.

The desire for self fulfilment, induced by the psychological conflict, naturally brings into existence a relationship of usage between man and man. Man uses his relationship with others to satisfy his unfulfilled psychological urges. A man subjected to incessant psychological conflict naturally seeks escapes on all sides. In the present age these conflicts have been greatly intensified with the result that there is an organized effort to build up different escapes from the unfortunate state in which man finds himself. Through political, economic, religious

and spiritual organizations man seeks self fulfilment. These organizations thus become fields of escape for him. He uses technological instruments and social organizations for self-aggrandizement, for his own glorification or as a means of temporary relief from psychological conflicts. In this effort he naturally forms groups—ideological, racial, religious—for he realizes that thus alone can he make his relationship of usage more effective. Individually he feels himself lost, and so through group action he seeks his own self-fulfilment.

Now, a relationship of usage is nothing but an exploitation of man by man. In this game of exploitation the strong exploits the weak. Exploitation naturally takes many forms—individuals exploiting other individuals, groups and nations exploiting other groups and nations. It functions not merely at the political, economic or social level. Exploitation is to be seen at the spiritual level also—one might say at the so-called spiritual level, for in a real spiritual state there can be no exploitation. Now exploitation pre-supposes a relationship of usage where one individual wants to use another for his own self-fulfilment. This will apply equally to nations as also to racial groups. We see all around us this exploitation going on, and therefore the problem of problems for us is to find out how this exploitation

between man and man, existing at social as well as spiritual levels, may be brought to an end

It is needless to say that exploitation is the very negation of Brotherhood, it is a negation of Right Relationship. We try to stop this exploitation by political, social or economic revolutions. We create organizations to fight exploitation. But history records that every revolution that started with the objective of bringing about a cessation of exploitation of man by man has ended by establishing new instruments of exploitation. An organization or a group or a class fights against the prevailing forms of exploitation. Thus the class which is overthrown becomes the victim of exploitation by the class that has come out successful in the course of a revolution. Our effort to end exploitation by means of political or social revolutions is bound to fail for we shall only replace one form of exploitation by another perhaps more cruel and inhuman.

It is curious that we fail to realize an obvious fact namely, that the root of exploitation is not in society—it is in the individual. It arises out of the unresolved psychological conflict raging within man himself. Today exploitation goes on at a tremendous speed and on a vast organizational scale. It is this vastness of the exploiting organization which has made us blind to the realization of the real centre of trouble which is the individual. Now

if the individual revolts against exploitation he finds himself against powerful vested interests, against the might of organizations—political, economic social or spiritual. He naturally feels overwhelmed by the force that is arrayed against him. If he does not submit to the exploitation that faces him he experiences frustration after frustration in his outer as well as inner life. Thus he willingly or unwillingly submits himself to the process of exploitation. It is this submission which lowers the dignity of man. The loss of dignity on the part of the human individual is one of the greatest tragedies of modern civilization. This has produced man's degeneration resulting in the disintegration of society. Without regeneration and integration of man Universal Brotherhood must remain a pious dream an empty hope. If the individual is the root of exploitation how can he step out of this degenerating process?

We have to realize that exploitation is a state in which one who is in a position of advantage material or spiritual, uses that position to keep others—not similarly situated—under his control. This control is exercised mainly through the distribution of material or spiritual rewards or prizes. And so in exploitation both the exploiter and the exploited try to seek their own gain. The exploiter seeks a continuity of authority or power whether material or spiritual, and the exploited seeks a continuity of

security whether material or spiritual. The desire for continuity—habitual or modified—is assuredly at the root of all exploitation. This continuity is indeed the "I"—that which continues in the midst of everything which changes

To stop this exploitation, which is a negation of Brotherhood it is obvious that the process of continuity must come to an end. Continuity introduces an element of mechanical repetition in life. And a life lived at the habitual or mechanical level is a dull life—it is a degenerating life. For continuity by its very process shuts out everything that is new and fresh. Its field of operation is the *known*. The *unknown* cannot enter the field of continuity. Continuity is indeed the field in which Mind functions, for thinking is possible only with reference to the *known*. John Macmurray in his book *Interpreting the Universe* says

"All thought pre-supposes knowledge. It is not possible to think about something that you do not already know. This is the principle which is frequently overlooked in philosophical discussion. We construct theories of knowledge which imply that knowledge is the result of thinking, and that it is essentially bound up with the process of reflective activity. The simple observation that you must know something before you can think about it completely upsets the equilibrium of all such theories."

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process distorts our vision. Our relationship, is naturally based on this distorted vision which the mind gives. Since distortion of vision is at the root of relationship it is but obvious that the correction of vision is our immediate problem. Brotherhood which is the pattern of Right Relationship cannot come into existence unless there is an undistorted Vision of Reality, of things, persons and ideas of the external world. An undistorted vision of man is essential before the Brotherhood of Humanity can become the basis of relationship between individual and individual. In other words, Brotherhood can be effective only as an expression of the undistorted Vision of Man.

In the sub human kingdoms we are able to have a perception of pure beauty which many a time we miss in the human form. A way side flower is able to thrill us but not so man. The men and women who form our society are not able to arrest our attention just as a flower or a tree or a sunset or a sunrise does. Why is this the case? It is because there is a distortion of vision in our contact with human beings. There is no wonder that with this distortion our relationship with men and women is far from right. Now in order to establish Right Relationship we must bring this distorting process of the Mind to a stop. In other words the Mind must be freed from the self enclosing wall of continuity. There is a pro-

Thus all thinking can be only within the realm of the known and the familiar. Thinking cannot go beyond this. And so Mind through its thinking creates a self enclosing wall of continuity. If any thing new is presented to the Mind it is immediately caught within the framework of the known. The new as new is never perceived by the Mind. The new is twisted into the framework of the old through the reflective processes of the Mind. N Sri Ram says in his book, *An Approach to Reality*

‘ When something quite beyond our experience-range is presented or described to us, it is next to impossible to picture it as it is. Thus it would seem impossible to imagine an entirely new fragrance one which has never hitherto been smelt by us. One can imagine of course bits of various known fragrances as being mingled together but it would not be a new fragrance one not so far come across which Nature may evolve. Obviously imagination has its definite limitations ’

And so thought can function only within the experience range of the individual and this experience range is the field of continuity. We never see things or persons or ideas as they are but only as modified by the mind in terms of its experience range. Between the Reality which pervades every thing and ourselves there stands the reflective operation of the mind which through its thinking

process distorts our vision. Our relationship, is naturally based on this distorted vision which the mind gives. Since distortion of vision is at the root of relationship it is but obvious that the correction of vision is our immediate problem. Brotherhood which is the pattern of Right Relationship cannot come into existence unless there is an undistorted Vision of Reality, of things, persons and ideas of the external world. An undistorted vision of man is essential before the Brotherhood of Humanity can become the basis of relationship between individual and individual. In other words, Brotherhood can be effective only as an expression of the undistorted Vision of Man.

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found statement by J. Krishnamurti in one of his talks where he says

"There is a creativeness in us when we are experiencing Reality constantly but not continuously "

We cannot perceive Reality constantly unless we step out of the process of continuity and see Life anew, afresh, from moment to moment. It is only then that we can have a vision which is freed from distortion How is this to be done ?

Our behavior or our relationship has two aspects—the aspect of Form and the aspect of Content It is not the continuity of form that degenerates us. In the sphere of forms, continuity or modified continuity must be the rule Such continuity is necessary for the economy of Nature In man made forms, too, destruction of forms would result in much waste of energy. They have to be destroyed only when they become too rigid and are not responsive to the impacts of Life. Forms must be sensitive enough to lend themselves to modification at the slightest touch of Life

It is the continuity of content which degenerates an individual as well as an organization If new impulses or content do not enter the life of an individual or an organization they are sure to become degenerated But how can the new enter so long as there is a process of continuity maintained by the

mind? It is but obvious that it is not subtle or abstract thinking that can bring us into contact with the new or the real John Macmurray says:

"To add idea to idea, to organize ideas into systems and to expand these systems without end brings us no nearer to Reality. To reach Reality we must overcome the abstraction of reflection itself."

It is only when the thinking or reflective activity of the mind comes to a stop that we can step out of the process of continuity and thus contact Reality—or whatever name we may like to give to that Reality God, Master, Truth Beauty, Goodness, etc. This indeed is the intuitive perception of Reality. It is not an impulsive approach of emotionalism—an approach whereby we go below the mind, rather it is an approach which is possible when one has transcended the limitations of the mind. Is it possible for us to have this Beyond the Mind vision?

We must clearly understand that intuition is not some rapid thinking. In fact mind cannot grasp it. All thinking about Intuition is only a mental picture—however beautiful it may be—arising out of our experience range. In other words, intuition cannot be understood within the framework of continuity. It can be perceived only when one, as it were, takes a jump from the mind and plunges into something which appears as utter nothingness to the mind. It

is this jump which constitutes the emptiness of content, for no burden of the mind can be carried into that nothingness, not even the noblest of ideals. When the Mind is free from its psychological content then alone the Vision of Reality is vouchsafed to us. Thus we can perceive Divinity in things, persons and ideas round about us only when the mind is freed from its psychological content. This indeed is Liberation which is dynamic and can be experienced only from moment to moment and never continuously. One must understand that there is a great deal of difference between Liberation and Salvation. Salvation is seeking freedom from action, Liberation is knowing what Right Action is. Since Life means relationship it is necessary for us to experience Liberation from moment to moment if we are to be rightly related. Thus Liberation is not contrary to any code of action, in fact our action can be right only in the background of Liberation. And Liberation is freeing the mind from its psychological content. Liberation, in other words, is a plunge into Nothingness.

The question is: How can we come to this emptiness of content so that we may be filled with the new? This means discovering that point in our psychological life from where we can take a jump and plunge into nothingness. For such a jump into the realms beyond the mind, it is necessary that our

mind must be extraordinarily alert, sensitive, receptive. How can one come to this alertness of mind ? C Jinarajadasa says in his book *The Mediator* .

"It requires courage to follow life swiftly to the uttermost verge of a seeming nothing But life gives the fullness of her joy only to the brave That is where the soul's supreme test lies—to go forth into an unknown, accompanied by life itself "

The mind can come to "the uttermost verge of a seeming nothing" when it is free from all the unnecessary load of non-essentials It is this process which is known as Discrimination or more correctly, Repudiation Our ancient philosophy says that in order to know the not Self in one's nature is the pathway to the knowledge of the Self It is by knowing the not Self in our nature that we shall be free from the burden of non essentials When that which we have recognized as not Self is put aside we arrive at a point which is ' the uttermost verge of a seeming nothing"

Now Repudiation is not condemnation—it is non identification It is as we put away the not Self as a result of our own experiences, and not on the authority of some one that our mind becomes truly alert An alert mind is a non identifying mind, 'and it is with such non identifying mind that one can observe life The identifying mind cannot

observe—it either drifts or it struggles. Now it is obvious that without observation we cannot understand anything. But observation is possible only when the mind is constantly in a state of non identification—not at the behest of somebody, but out of one's own experience. To be non identifying at the behest of somebody is a contradiction in terms, for in this there is identification with that which somebody has stated! When there is non identification due to one's own experience then one puts away the not-Self without any effort. It just drops—it has not to be pushed away. When one observes Life in such a state of non identification there is displayed in one's consciousness a true quality of Desirelessness. Observation is that state where the reflective operations, the modifying activities of the mind have come to a stop.

When can the reflective operations of the mind come to a stop? It is evident that mind can think only when there are alternatives before it—alternatives to a situation or to a problem which the mind is dealing with. When there are no alternatives the mind has no material to think about. Now Discrimination is a process in which alternative after alternative has been put aside till the mind comes to a position where there is no alternative with reference to the problem or the situation it is tackling. In such a position the thinking operations of the mind

come naturally to a stop. It is in such a state that we can receive Life as it comes—this is contacting Life in utter negativity. Needless to say that such negativity is possible only when the mind is in a state of non identification. When mind observes Life in this condition of negativity there dawns upon it a silence—a ‘peace that passeth all understanding’. It is in this silence—and there alone—that the whisper of intuition can be heard. In this silence alone is born Love which is the right perception of men and things—a Vision of Reality—a Vision of the Divinity of Man. It is this Love which is the basis of Right Relationship of Universal Brotherhood. *Light on the Path* says

“Look for the flower to bloom in the silence that follows the storm not till then. And in the deep silence the mysterious event will occur which will prove that the way has been found. Call it by what name you will, it is a voice that speaks where there is none to speak—it is a messenger that comes—a messenger without form or substance, or it is the flower of the soul that has opened.

It is in this silence that man's psychological conflict is resolved, he has an undistorted Vision of Reality. It is in this background of an undistorted Vision of Reality, the Divinity of Man that Universal Brotherhood can become the natural pattern of our behavior. To have this vision

constantly, from moment to moment, is to discover that point from where one can 'never err, it is to act from the very centre of one's being—the centre from where all parts of the circumference are equidistant. Right Relationship or Universal Brotherhood is truly this Action from the Centre, the point of consciousness from where we have an undistorted Vision of Reality.

2

THE PROBLEMS OF RELATIONSHIP

IN THE task of building up of a Community, such as a family or an ideological group, our fundamental problem is naturally that of Relationship. If we could be rightly related to each other our life as a Community would grow from richness to richness. The various details of our administrative and organisational work, as also the details of our everyday life, would then take their proper places—and not loom disproportionately large as they do at present. It is therefore necessary that each member of such a Community should find out why he or she is not rightly related to other members of the Community. We have to understand that the obstacles to right relationship are not outside of us *but within us*. It is not the change of circumstances nor a transformation in the lives of other people that will bring a state of Right Relationship for us. This is our own individual problem and so we must tackle it ourselves. This can be done only by honestly searching our hearts and minds. It is only in this honest inquiry of ourselves, by ourselves, that the real obstacles to Right Relationship can be found.

In order to carry on this honest inquiry, the following questions may be of some help :

1. Do you tend to become more and more irritable, angry, disturbed, upset at the happenings round about you as also at the behaviour of those who work with you or under you ?

2. Do you feel more and more a desire to give vent to these feelings of anger and irritability ?

3. Do you tend to suppress these feelings of annoyance and disturbance ?

4. Have you noticed that such suppression affects your work and your relationship particularly with your subordinates, servants and dependents ?

5. Does not this constant suppression make you depressed and tired ?

6. Do you feel repentant after having given vent to your feelings of annoyance and disturbance ?

7. Do you move about with a sense of grievance—a feeling that no one understands you and that an injustice is being done to you ?

8. Do you feel a sense of frustration in life and work ?

9. Do you feel your interest in life, as well as in the work which you are required to do, growing less and less ?

10 Do you feel the pressure of life and work too much ?

11 Can you relax easily ? Do you feel the need for a complete cessation of your usual work in order to relax ?

12 Are you very tense during your moments of work or can you mentally relax even when physically active ?

13 Do you feel like avoiding those persons with whom you work during your moments of rest and leisure ?

14 Do you always talk shop or are you able to take your mind completely off the work ?

15 Are your points of contact with those around you growing or decreasing or are they just the same ?

16 Can you really listen to others ? Or do you listen with a mind that is already made up ?

17 Can you listen to those who have an entirely different approach to life and work from the one which you have ?

18 Can you divest yourself of the *status* which you or others may have put on your functions—in other words can you function efficiently without feeling that you must maintain a *status* ?

19 Can you wield your authority very lightly or do you feel your authority wounded when somebody does something contrary to your plans and instructions ?

20 Do you pass quick judgments on others or can you pause before condemning or criticising the other person ?

21 What is your immediate reaction when somebody points out a defect in your thought and action ? Do you justify yourself or do you quietly listen and examine yourself in the light of his or her remarks ?

22 Can people—your subordinates servants and dependents—easily approach you or do they try to avoid you out of fear ?

23 Can you freely discuss problems of work and relationship with those concerned or do you keep these problems to yourself and take unilateral decisions ?

24 In your relationship with others do you keep back something and thus talk and behave with them with certain mental reservations ?

25 Do not such mental reservations create a tendency of resistance in you with reference to persons and events that form part of your daily contacts ?

26 Do you realize that the natural outcome of such resistance is an increasing tendency to criticize and find fault with others rather than appreciate the persons and events that constitute your environment ?

27 Do you first appreciate others—your equals subordinates servants or dependents—or is your first reaction that of criticism and finding faults ?

28 Can you admit your faults easily before your equals and subordinates ? Is there resistance while admitting such faults or is the admission hedged in by explanations ?

29 Can you genuinely respect those who work with you or under you ? Are you mindful of their self respect in words as well as deeds ?

30 Do you cling to your beliefs methods and positions or can you hold these lightly realizing that there may be defects and drawbacks in them ?

It is as we answer these questions honestly to ourselves that we shall discover numerous obstacles created by us which prevent us from establishing Right Relationship with others. We must address ourselves to this task so that through our united efforts we may create a Community of individuals who are rightly related with each other

3

CONTROL OF THE MIND

In the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Arjuna states that the mind is extremely fickle and therefore hard to control. This is the experience of all who work either for their spiritual or material advancement. For any success in the world, man needs to concentrate and this is possible only if the mind does not fly off in different directions but is capable of giving its full attention to the work it is required to do. In spiritual life too, where man desires to meditate, he meets with the constant difficulty of a mind that is extremely slippery. Thus control of the mind is an intensely practical problem for all, for, without it, man's path is constantly blocked. In the modern world, where the struggle for existence has become very acute, man is greatly in search of a formula whereby he may be able to control his wandering mind. The development of an effective personality is engaging more and more the attention of those who are seeking power and position in the world. Pelmanism and numerous other cults for personality-development are gaining in popularity and they deal with the problems of clear and effective thinking.

Thus man has come to realize that his thinking plays a great part in moulding his actions and that mind is not a factor to be easily dispensed with

Now, what is this control of the mind and why does man attach so much importance to it? It is obvious that the mind is the most powerful faculty of human consciousness. Man naturally desires to forge it as an instrument which he can wield easily and effectively. An instrument to be effective has to be extraordinarily pliable so that it can be used under all circumstances. If the instrument is rigid it will fail to adapt itself to varying situations of life. A rigid mind will therefore put its own control over man, it will condition him because of its conditioned nature. Due to its inadaptability man will be helpless under certain conditions and will have to confine himself within the restrictions imposed by such a mind.

A really controlled mind is therefore a pliable mind, a mind that can adapt itself to all situations. It is an instrument which man wields according to his requirements. Now, if a mind is tied to anything—an object, a person, an idea or an ideal—it naturally loses its pliability and therefore it cannot be used effectively as an instrument. It is a rigid mind, for it can move only within the length of its cable tow. It is but obvious that an instrument can be effective only if it does not have a will of its own.

If the instrument has its own will it will naturally come into conflict with the will of the individual who desires to use it. Such a mind will render itself ineffective as an instrument. Now the will of the mind is composed of the centres of psychological interest it possesses. Mind naturally desires to function through these centres and so they serve as distractions or deviations from the path that the human individual wants his mind to adopt. It is here that the conflict arises between man and his mind so that he declares that it is extremely difficult to control the mind. The tendencies of the mind are centred round its psychological interests. So long as these interests persist so long must the mind remain inefficient as an instrument because of the operations of its own will. To talk of the controlled mind in the midst of these centres of psychological interest is therefore meaningless. We have first to liquidate these centres out of which arises the will of the mind as against the will of the individual.

A controlled mind is therefore one which is free from all distractions, one in which all centres of psychological interest have been liquidated. In other words it is a mind which is not tied to anything—not even to ideals. It is absolutely free to move about under the direction of its user. It is pliable and therefore capable of meeting all situations. It is like a channel which man can use for his own pur

poses. It is like a pen in the hand of man through which he can write whatever he pleases. It is like a crystalline lens which does not distort the ray that passes through it. A mind that is free from all attachments, that is, from psychological memory, has naturally no element of resistance in it. It, therefore, lends itself to easy adaptation. In other words, it is able to turn its full and undistracted attention to anything that is presented to it. Such is indeed the nature of a controlled mind—a mind that has been forged into a pliable instrument.

But the question is: how to come to this state of a controlled mind? In the *Bhagavad Gita*, replying to the inquiry made by Arjuna as to how the mind can be brought under control, Shri Krishna says: control of the mind is possible by Practice (अभ्यास) and Renunciation (वैराग्य). Now this is a formula which is philosophically most profound and psychologically most practical. It is therefore essential to clearly understand the implications of Practice and Renunciation. The nature of these two seems to be mutually exclusive, nay, contradictory. Practice needs an active approach, while Renunciation is pre eminently negative. How can these two be combined? And yet the whole secret of mind control lies in the harmonious relationship between these two contradictory factors. The great difficulty is that most of us show forth *passivity* in Practice and *positivity* in Renunciation.

Thus even though we are familiar with these two words given in the *Bhagavad Gita*, we have not been able to utilize them for bringing about a controlled state of mind

What does Practice mean and how does it imply an active approach? Practice surely does not mean a mere mechanical reproduction or repetition of what has been done before. Practice does not function on the level of habit. It is said that 'practice maketh a man perfect'. Now one cannot reach perfection in anything by mere mechanical repetition of what one has learnt. Perfection is possible only by eliminating imperfections. We often say we must put our best into anything that we do. But we hardly realize that we cannot put our best unless we know what is "less best". It is by putting aside the "less best", the imperfect, that we are enabled to put our best into the work. This is indeed the meaning of Practice. A musician, who practises music, or a ceremonialist who does ritual practice, has all the time to know what is imperfect or incorrect. In the practice of virtue one has to be constantly aware of the imperfect manifestations of that quality. Practice, in other words, implies correction of mistakes. It is, therefore, possible only with a discriminating or watchful mind. While with one part of our being we may be engaged in doing something—be it thinking or speaking or

acting—with the other part of our being we must be watchful of how we are doing it. It is this watchfulness which will reveal to us the "less best" or the imperfect factors constituting our deed. When we have known something as imperfect, it will not be difficult for us to put it aside. And so Practice means doing a thing with a watchful mind. Now this is exactly what we do not do. We bring a mind which has been dulled through mechanical repetitions to bear upon any practice in which we may be engaged. We show forth a passivity in practice—be it at the level of virtues or meditation or music or ritual or any other thing—and thus close our eyes to the imperfections or inaccuracies that are present in it. Our practice therefore does not lead us to perfections but only to the stabilization of a habit, whether of the body or of the emotions or of the mind. There is no wonder, therefore, that such a practice tires us out as all mechanical work does. Practice must result in the sharpening of the mind, so that even the least inaccuracy or imperfection is immediately detected. If the mind is to be forged into an effective instrument it must be sharpened.

Now, a sharpened instrument, with a will of its own, will cause much harm to the individual who desires to use it. It is here that Renunciation needs to be understood. A watchful, discriminating mind will no doubt detect inaccuracies and imperfections. After

all the inaccuracies have been put aside; the mind is bound to come to a point where it will see, for the time-being the only true and accurate way of performing that deed. It does not mean that this particular way does not contain inaccuracies, but for the present the mind is not able to detect them. The natural tendency of the mind under those circumstances will be to cling fast to that way, to be dogmatic about it, to regard it as the absolute truth. The mind has discovered a new centre of psychological interest and holds fast to it. The mind that has been sharpened by Practice exercises a greater control over the man than was the case prior to such Practice. Such a sharpened mind, clinging fast to what it regards as right, produces a severe conditioning of the man. To hold lightly that which one has discovered as right and true after a process of discrimination is indeed to show forth a quality of Renunciation. It is evident that Renunciation has no meaning if a person has nothing of his own to renounce. It is easy to renounce things about which we have heard or read. But that which has been discovered by us after a process of discrimination is *our own*. To hold even this lightly is not to allow the mind to establish any centre of psychological interest. This is a negative approach even as Practice is an active one. If the mind clings fast it will move away from Practice and thus lose all sense of

discrimination. It will not be able to detect any inaccuracies and imperfections. It will thus be rigid and stationary being tied to that which it considers as right and true. Thus even though Practice may have sharpened it, it will not have that pliability which is required of an effective instrument. The new centre of psychological interest will again prove a distraction causing the same difficulties of control as were evident before Practice was undertaken. Thus Practice and Renunciation have not to come one after the other—they must remain together. Practice will continue to sharpen the mind while Renunciation will continue to wipe off all traces of psychological attachment round which the mind may create centres of its own will. That which has been discovered as true by the mind as a result of practice may, at best, be considered as a temporary resting place. But it should not be allowed to become a comfortable abode. To make it into a centre of psychological interest is to establish it as an abode. Practice enables us to discover resting places but Renunciation prevents us from settling down there. It is the mind that has no permanent abode which is truly free and controlled. It has no distractions and so is able to give its full attention to every situation.

The *Bhagavad Gita* truly indicates to us the path for the control of the mind. It is through Practice and Renunciation that the mind can be made into a

pliable instrument for the expression and communication of man's spiritual impulses. An Occult manual says: "Though thou fightest, be not thou the warrior": this indeed is the secret of mind-control. It is the path of a sharpened mind discovering resting places but renouncing them as places of abode. The great Chinese philosopher, Lao-Tze, says: "The way of the self-controlled man is to act and not to fight". He is not passive and yet is he supremely negative; he is not positive and yet is he the very embodiment of Action. Spiritual life is full of paradoxes and it is in resolving the paradox of Practice and Renunciation that we shall understand the secret of mind-control.

DESIRELESSNESS

In *At the Feet of the Master*, Desirelessness or *Vairagya* has been given as the second of the great qualifications necessary for those treading the path of spiritual life. It follows the qualification described as Discrimination or *Viveka*, about which it is stated in that book that it must be practised every day until the end. Thus the qualification of Desirelessness or for the matter of that any other qualification on the spiritual path, must function in the continuous background of Discrimination. And so in order to understand Desirelessness we must know what we exactly mean by Discrimination.

What is Discrimination, and why should it be a never-ceasing background of the spiritual life? Discrimination is obviously a state of Awareness a state in which the physical the emotional and the mental bodies are extraordinarily alert and awake. It is a state in which the physical senses are aware of the subtlest vibrations that they are capable of responding to. It is a state in which the emotional body is keenly receptive so that it can catch finer notes of emotions surging in the hearts of men. It

is a state in which the mind is so keen and sharp that it can discern truth from wherever it comes. Discrimination is thus the tuning up of the instrument of our conscious life so that it may play whatever music it is required to play. A properly tuned instrument must constitute a continuous background if the musician is to play the Divine Music which inspires him. Discrimination is a state of constant watchfulness, a state of physical and mental awareness, and this can be maintained only by a continual process of discarding that which is not essential, not important, not real, not good.

In this background of constant repudiation (which is Discrimination) can Desirelessness truly function. As N. Sri Ram says in his *Thoughts for Aspirants*: 'The way of Self-realization as shown in the ancient books is the way of repudiation, or as he says at another place in the same book, "To know the not-Self in one's nature is the pathway to the knowledge of the Self." Discrimination is thus the process of knowing the not-Self in our nature. The moment this process stops, we are lost in the identification of the Self and the not-Self. Thus a state of ceaseless awareness in which we repudiate that which is not real, that which is not Self, is absolutely essential if we are to move further on the path of spiritual life. It is in this background that we must examine the qualification of Desirelessness.

What is Desirelessness? Is it the suppression of desires or the complete annihilation of all desires? Obviously it cannot mean this, for in such suppression or annihilation the mind and the emotional bodies of man must become utterly dull and unresponsive. In other words such suppression or annihilation can be brought about only by giving up Discrimination—the state of mental and emotional alertness. The annihilation of desires would render a man non-receptive to the mental and emotional life round about him. For him the process of repudiation must come to a stop, and this means that the man who has suppressed or annihilated desires is one who has identified himself with one particular state of mental and emotional life. Such identification obviously brings the process of repudiation to an end and so such Desirelessness is not in the background of emotional and mental awareness—it functions in the background of mental and emotional settlement, in other words, in a state of identification, away from the process of repudiation. It therefore can not be called Desirelessness. What then is Desirelessness?

In *Light on the Path* there is a very profound statement which truly describes the state of Desirelessness. It says "Though thou fightest, be not thou the warrior." In other words, it is to be a witness to life in the moment of highest awareness.

To look at life without awareness is to be passive, but to be a witness to life in the midst of awareness is to be truly negative. It is this true negativity which is Desirelessness. To be extraordinarily aware of life in all its richness and yet to be negative to it—what greater Desirelessness can there be than this? To have the most subtle sensitiveness, physically, emotionally and mentally, and yet to be utterly negative—neither accepting nor rejecting that which we have perceived during that moment of highest sensitivity—this indeed is true Desirelessness, *a state of repose in the midst of highest tension*. It is Discrimination that produces the state of tension—it is Desirelessness that displays complete repose in the midst of this tenseness. The tenseness indicates a perfect tuning of the instrument. A true musician is beautifully reposed, for thus alone can he produce the Divine Music. A state of tension without repose is sure to result in feverish excitement, a condition of impulsiveness. In the same way a state of repose without tension constitutes a condition of lethargy, idleness, inaction or utter coldness. Thus Discrimination which does not result in Desirelessness may lead a man to greater irritability, anger, impatience and feverish excitement; while Desirelessness which does not function in the background of Discrimination is likely to produce in man a tendency of coldness, of inaction,

of utter indifference. Repose which is negativity when displayed in the midst of highest tension enables a man to qualify himself for right spiritual action. Right action can emerge only through Desirelessness and the latter must always function in the background of ceaseless repudiation which is Discrimination.

A state of tension is one where man's normal consciousness has come to a focal point—a point which as it were is the summation of life's experiences with reference to the object or the incident under consideration. It is a point which holds the entire past of the man in relation to that object or incident. A tension can arise only when the whole of the past experience is brought to a point—it is the highest point of man's repudiation with reference to the object or the incident before him. As a man cannot go further in his process of repudiation he is alert but tense. It is that moment of tenseness which is very important in the spiritual life of man. For he may either accept or reject that object or incident with reference to which he has come to the highest point of repudiation. If he does that, his movement on the spiritual path comes to a stop. But if at this point he can be desireless that is, negative or perfectly reposed he can rapidly move further on the path of true spirituality. This condition of repose in the midst of highest tension

can be experienced in man's everyday life with reference to objects and incidents of daily occurrence. We can arrive at the point of tenseness in our everyday life by constant watchfulness which means by ceaseless repudiation. If at this moment we can remain perfectly reposed or negative we shall know what right action should be with reference to matters of daily occurrence. Discrimination leads us to the pathway of Desirelessness and if we choose to walk along this path we can come to the realization of right action. And what else is spirituality but Right Action—action born out of utter negativity in the background of highest tension in relation to the daily occurrences of life ?

5

GOOD CONDUCT

In *At the Feet of the Master* the third qualification postulates the observance of Good Conduct. Later on there is a detailed description of the six fold aspects of Good Conduct. This description is, as it were, the breaking up of the white light of Good Conduct into its spectrum. Before we examine the detailed description, it is, therefore, necessary for us to understand the meaning and significance of Good Conduct.

What is good Conduct? Obviously a conduct which has a motive behind it cannot be called good. If the practice of virtue is for personal salvation or for the acquiring of spiritual merit, such practice cannot come under Good Conduct. If through service we are aspiring to reach some spiritual or occult heights, it is not Good Conduct. The service that one performs may be very efficient, but if it is motivated by a desire to shine, or a desire to progress, or a desire to seek relief from personal problem, such service cannot come under the category of Good. In this context Good Conduct is not different from Right Action on which the Lord Buddha has laid

so much stress. And so Good Conduct is not a profitable conduct, not one which enables us to accumulate spiritual or occult merit, but one which is Right. A conduct which has a motive behind it, whether good or bad, is only a reaction to outer environment—it does not matter on which level that reaction is, physical, emotional, mental or spiritual.

A reaction is an action with motive and so it invariably looks to the future for its fulfilment. It is the motive which creates the future and by calling out reactions from us binds us to the chain of past and future which, in other words, is the operation of Karma. A reaction is therefore an action which is not complete—it means it needs a future for its completion. To look forward to a future for the completion of one's action is to display a conduct which cannot be described as Good or Right.

Good Conduct is indeed Pure Action, action which is complete, action which is its own fulfilment and needs no future to fulfil itself. How is one to perform such an action? It is here that the description of Good Conduct helps us. The six aspects of Good Conduct described in the above book are not different stages of Right Action—they are different ways of looking at the same Reality of Good Conduct or Right Action. In other words, they are

the expressions of the same Reality at different levels. It is like different pictures of the same object and so there is nothing inferior or superior with regard to these six aspects—sometimes known as *Shatsam patti* or six instruments or powers. They are all efforts at conveying the meaning and significance of Good Conduct.

This will become obvious as we perceive the common factor behind the six aspects of Good Conduct. These aspects assuredly deal with control and control is absence of modification. To arrive at a state where there is no modification at different layers of one's consciousness is to know what true control is. Control is not suppression, mortification, curbing of one's nature. It is a state of Tranquillity in which there is no modification. And this indeed is what is described in the six aspects of Good Conduct.

They are *Shama*—non modification of the senses, *Dama*—non modification of *Prana* or vitality, *Uparati*—tolerance or non modification of feelings, for intolerance there can be no disturbance of feelings, in other words no element of resistance, *Titika*—cheerfulness or non modification of thought. It is when thought dwells on the past that one begins to compare and contrast and it is this comparison or contrast which brings happiness or unhappiness to the individual. A person who is free from psycho-

logical memory is always cheerful for he is free from comparison and contrast and therefore free from all modifications of thought, *Shraddhā*—often translated as One pointedness, which is non modification of one's vision—it is a condition in which the mind is not distracted by anything, *Samādhān*—translated as Confidence which means non modification of one's entire being—a state of non disturbance in one's entire nature. Thus all the six aspects of Good Conduct deal with a state of non modification, a state in which there is no distraction. As stated above there is nothing inferior or superior about these aspects for wherever there is non modification there is Good Conduct. This non modification may be at the level of *Śīma* or it may be at the level of *Samādhān*—levels do not matter so far as the fundamental nature of Good Conduct is concerned.

What is this non modification? It is a state of non resistance, so that a person of Good Conduct shows forth no resistance to his environment either through the senses, or through actions or through emotions or through ideal, or through his entire being. Life has left no centre of psychological recognition at any layer of his consciousness. He is able to regard life as a procession of events without stimulating in him any centre of psychological recognition. It is a state of non distraction so that there

— no ripple of agitation in his consciousness. It is such a man alone who can truly sympathise, who can truly understand, for he is verily in the state of 'immaculate sensitive passivity.'

It does not matter at what level this non modification rests, for at every point of non modification one can know what Good Conduct is. There is nothing high or low with regard to these points of non modification. It is only in this state of non modification that Love (or Liberation) is born. As the *Light on the Path* says "Look for the flower to bloom in the silence that follows the storm, not *till* then.' This silence is obviously the state of non modification where alone the '*still, small voice*' can be heard. It is only against the background of non modification, which is Good Conduct, that man realizes Love. The state of non modification can be at where man stands for it means a state of non resistance on the part of one's normal consciousness. Once again it does not matter whether the field of normal consciousness is large or small, whether it operates at the mental level or at the intuitive level— what matters is the non modification of one's normal consciousness which may be at any point of the six aspects of Good Conduct.

But when the man of Love conveys his experience—and he cannot help conveying it—it is then

that he needs different capacities, a variety of instruments. The larger the field he controls, the richer will be the communication of his experience. And so having experienced Love through any point of non modification, he develops his capacities in order to utilize all the six aspects of Good Conduct in order to convey his experience in the best possible manner. Having known what Love (or Liberation) is he tries to perfect his means for the expression of that Love. And it is as such that he takes one by one the six points of Good Conduct—they become the means of expression so that that which was the point of non modification becomes after the experience of Love a point of Communication. And from this point of Communication he draws a larger and larger circle so as to include virtue after virtue, which in other words is Communication over larger and larger fields of expression.

The question is: How to come to this point of non modification where alone Love is experienced? Is it possible for man to arrive at that state where his normal consciousness shows forth non resistance? We shall know how to arrive at that state if we re-examine the implications of Discrimination and Desirelessness. The state of non modification comes, it cannot be brought. It comes when we are choicelessly aware of ourselves. And choiceless awareness is what Discrimination and Desirelessness

indicate. In the very awareness of what we are, there comes about a state of non-modification or a state of Good Conduct. Truly does Patanjali tell us that non-modification is Yoga, for Yoga is a state of Oneness—and where can there be Oneness except in the condition of Love ?

6

LIVING IN THE ETERNAL

In the *Light on the Path* there is a passage which throws an immense light on the problems of the spiritual life. It reads as follows

‘Nothing that is embodied, nothing that is conscious of separation, nothing that is out of the Eternal can aid you’

This obviously refers to the aid we need in our moments of psychological strain and stress in periods of spiritual tribulation. We are told that nothing that is out of the Eternal can help us in such moments. It is necessary for us to examine the above statement as fully as possible.

We are told that ‘Nothing that is embodied can aid us’. It must mean that nothing that is manifested on any of the planes can aid us in our spiritual life. The above statement does not say that, that which is *physically embodied* cannot aid us—it talks of everything that is embodied. Thus neither the physical form of the Master nor our subtlest thought forms can give us any help so far as the fundamental spiritual problem is concerned. An idea or an ideal

too is a manifestation and as such comes under the category of that which is embodied. Thus it is not from the realm of manifestation that we can receive aid in matters spiritual and psychological.

It is further stated that 'Nothing that is conscious of separation' can aid us. Now in the world of relationship, consciousness of separation is inevitable. Relationship is possible only between separate units—it has no meaning in a world of non duality. In other words, in the realm of space and time, relationship becomes necessary because of separation which exists between two objects or persons or ideas. Thus relationship pre supposes separation and so we must realize that in the world of relationship we can receive no aid whatsoever. It has to be remembered that relationship is possible only between two manifested things—it does not matter whether that manifestation is on the physical plane or on super-physical planes. The second statement therefore re emphasizes the point that spiritual aid is not to be found in the manifested region.

We are further told that 'Nothing that is out of the Eternal' can aid us. Once again this means we cannot find help in the world of forms with its laws of growth and evolution. Evolution or growth is obviously in the realm of manifestation. If no aid is to be found outside the Eternal, it clearly means that the aid we seek in our spiritual life is not to be

had as a result of evolutionary process. In other words, receiving of this aid is not a matter of growth and development, for these happen only in the realm of manifestation.

And so the *Light on the Path* indicates by the above statement that spiritual aid can be found by us here and now, in the midst of all the difficulties of life, and not through a process of growth and evolution. But we are told that it cannot be found out of the Eternal, and so the implication is, that we can contact the Eternal here and now and not as a result of any evolutionary process. Evolutionary process deals with the growth of that which is embodied, it deals with refinement in relationship, it has no concern with that which is beyond embodiments, beyond manifestation, beyond the realm of relationships.

It is therefore quite obvious that the Vision of the Eternal is for us a practical problem, for without it no aid can be found in moments of spiritual and psychological crisis. How to 'see' the Eternal? To have a Vision of the Eternal is to be one with it—all other seeing is only the perceiving of an image. We are familiar with our ordinary sight. Our seeing of physical objects is no seeing at all—it is only our interpretation of the object. We cannot see anything unless the duality of the seer and the seen vanishes.

As long as a subject looks upon an object, there is the perception only of an image of the object. And so to see the Eternal is to be one with it, and unless we are one with it, we cannot receive aid in our moments of spiritual tribulation.

Is such a Vision of the Eternal possible for us in the midst of all our mundane activities? Or have we to retire from the world in order to establish a contact with the Eternal? We need the aid of the Eternal here and now in the midst of all our difficulties, if we cannot have it now of what use is any aid received when we are no longer in need of it? Thus the Vision of the Eternal is an immediate problem for all of us, thrown as we are in the difficulties and the trials of life.

Now to say that we must establish our contact with the Eternal implies that the Eternal is not present everywhere but has its location somewhere. If it is located somewhere it can be contacted only through a process of time and if it is everywhere, how does the question of establishing a contact arise? It is true that the Eternal is everywhere that the Transcendental is the Ground in which the Immanent exists. And yet the Immanence is not the Transcendence. The Eternal transcends all the limitations of time, the Infinite cannot be confined in the finite. It should however be borne in mind that the Infinite cannot be away from the finite, too

Thus while the Eternal is present everywhere, it is other than that which we see, hear, touch smell or taste, nay, it is other than what the mind can think of. The normal consciousness of man can see only the reflection of the Eternal, the 'seeing of the Eternal, the contact with the Eternal is possible only outside the normal consciousness of man where seeing is not with the eyes, and where touching is not with the hands

But since our difficulties and trials are in our normal consciousness, we are concerned with the influence of the Eternal here, where we are. As stated above, the normal consciousness can perceive only the reflection of the Eternal. Now the reflection can be clear or it can be blurred. Thus the mind of man may receive either a perfect image or a distorted one. It is but obvious that if the mind receives a distorted image, this distortion will be conveyed through all the channels of communication that it may have. The perfection of the channel will not alter the fact of distortion. No doubt, such perfection will enable us to convey our vision more effectively, but the content of that channel will be the distorted vision.

Since the mind is the most powerful instrument that we have in our normal consciousness, it will receive the Ray of Reality. If its surface is agitated the reflection of Reality that it will show will

naturally be blurred and distorted. If this happens all our forms of expression will have this distortion as their indwelling impulse. They will, therefore, be not in contact with the Eternal but with the distortion of it. Such distortion will doubtless produce disintegration and degeneration in the forms

The question is How does distortion happen? What is the state of mind which produces the blurring of the image? If we understand this process of distortion, it may be possible for us to remove the main obstacle that stands in the way of our 'seeing' the Eternal. In the second discourse of the *Bhagavad Gita* there are two verses which throw unique light on the problem of distortion. They are verses 62 and 63 and read as follows

"Man, musing on the objects of sense conceiveth an attachment to these, from attachment ariseth desire, from desire anger cometh forth. From anger proceedeth delusion, from delusion confused memory from confused memory the destruction of Reason; from destruction of Reason he perishes."

The term used for distortion in the above verses is Destruction of Reason, (बुद्धिनाश) and we are told, that when this happens man perishes, which really means the disintegration and degeneration produced in his life. It is said that the people who have no

vision perish. It is indeed true, for the moment the Vision of the Eternal is lost, the forms of immanence are deprived of the very vitality by which they can be sustained. When this vitality disappears there assuredly come disease and degeneration in the outer forms of life. The question is: How does man come to this destruction of Reason (बुद्धिनाश) ?

We are told that the whole process starts with self-identification (संज्ञा) produced by the operations of the mind. Man becomes identified with his environment, physical, emotional or mental. He attaches the word 'my' to things, persons and ideas, in whose contact he comes. From this self-identification naturally arises desire (काम) for repeating pleasant experiences and for avoiding unpleasant ones. Thus man approaches life with anticipation or expectation. But nature does not fulfil man's expectation, for things, persons and ideas begin to behave in a manner not expected by him. Thus he develops a sense of resistance (क्रोध) against the environment. He meets life with resistance, trying to push away unfavourable circumstances and preventing the favourable circumstances from being pushed out. And so man creates a barrier of resistance against all that comes from life. Such a state naturally brings about delusion (संमोह) in his mind, so that he is not able to see things as they are but only through his projections. To see things through projections is

surely to be utterly deluded. Such a deluded person cannot understand life, cannot understand his environment, because he refuses to see the facts of life and is carried away by his projections.

Now out of this delusion there arises the confusion of memory (स्मृतिविभ्रम). This indeed, is a very remarkable word used in the *Bhagavad Gita*. What is meant by confusion of memory? There are two types of memory—the memory of facts and the memory of feelings. When into the facts of life we project our feelings there naturally is the loss of the memory of facts and the only memory that operates is the psychological memory or the memory of feelings. In other words, there is the confusion of the grades of significance. Into the grade of a thing, person or idea we project a different grade. We are not able to see the grade which essentially belongs to a thing, person or an idea—and we ask these to give something which they cannot give. Confusion of the grades of significance is indeed the cause of man's unhappiness. It is this which prevents him from seeing Life as it is. Thus man's vision becomes distorted (बुद्धिनाश) due to the confusion of memory or the confusion of the grades of significance. And this confusion arises because of our projections, and projections are due to resistances brought about by anticipation, and anticipation arises out of self-identification.

Thus the *Bhagavad-Gita* tells us that it is the confusion of memory which produces a distortion of the Vision of the Eternal, and with this distortion comes disintegration in man's life. Now the Vision of the Eternal becomes distorted because of the agitation of the mind caused by the confusion of memory. The Vision must be corrected here and now, for otherwise distortion will be carried through all channels of communication that we may have. While the modes of communication cause restriction to the expression of the Eternal, the medium of transmission, which the mind is, may cause distortion of the Vision. It is the task of Occultism to remove, one by one, the restrictions that exist in the channels of communication, but it is the function of Mysticism to correct the Vision so that all distortion may disappear.

Thus we can live in the Eternal by correcting our Vision here and now, and this alone will give us help in the midst of all our psychological and spiritual problems of life.

ACTION AND ACTIVITY

It is necessary for us to understand the distinction between Action and Activity. Ours is an age full of activity but with very little action. What is the distinction between the two?

An Activity is a reaction on the part of the individual, or the group, to mental or physical environment. In other words, Activity is something which is called out by outer environment. Its source of operation is, therefore, outside. Needless to say environmental conditions may be varied; it may be the instruction received from the superior, whether professional or spiritual, or it may be the satisfaction of physical or idealistic urges. Having established an ideal, one may organise one's reactions to it and these will assuredly take the form of individual or collective activity. This is how political, social, humanitarian, educational or religious activity is organised. All activities, however noble be their objective, are invariably rooted in environment—whether physical or super-physical. It matters little if the environment is composed of ideals and ideas

projected by the individual or the group, for such projection of ideals and ideas is also a reaction—a mental reaction—arising out of the experiences of the past. Thus an activity is a reaction organised by the Mind through the instrumentality of Memory. Such an activity may be on the physical, emotional or mental plane. Thus meditation too can be an activity if it is only a reaction to the ideal or aspiration established by an individual. A reaction is always a movement within a particular pattern. Activities are, therefore, bound by patterns—patterns of physical habit or mental ideations.

What then is Action? Action is an expression of one's experience. It is rooted not in environment but in experience. Action is therefore always a symbol suggesting the reality of experience. It is interpretative, for it is an expression of something which is behind the outer form. Like a work of true art it is suggestive for it invites one to discover its true meaning outside the frontiers of its richest expression.

Action is always alive because it springs from one's own experience. Its source of emergence is the Vision which the individual has. Such an individual naturally pours into the vehicle of expression the living waters of his own experience. His action, however small it may be, has a touch of

something vital because of the Vision or the Inspiration he has contacted. While the highest motive for a man of activity is Duty—moral obligation—to the man of action there is no motive, for his expression is the natural outcome of his experience.

Most of our work is just activity performed either at the behest of some superior authority professional or spiritual, or at the behest of Duty or Loyalty arising out of the ideal placed before the mind. Thus it is a reaction to physical or super-physical environment. We are active not because our inner experience impels us, but because of Duty or Loyalty—many times because of hope. The following words from *Light on the Path* very aptly describe this state of reaction which we call activity.

The pure artist who works for the love of his work is sometimes more firmly planted on the road than the occultist who fancies he has removed his interest from self, but who has in reality only enlarged the limits of experience and desire, and transferred his interest to things which concern his larger span of life.

To a man of Action the whole life is truly ceremonial, for in a ceremonial everything is suggestive, symbolical, an expression of *something* that is beyond all forms. An activity has nothing behind

ACTION AND REACTION

The Law of Karma is one of the main pillars of the magnificent edifice constructed by modern Theosophical philosophy. One of its postulates is Action and Reaction are equal and opposite. This means that as is the intensity of action so will be the counter-intensity of reaction. It also implies that there is a duality of one who acts and one who is acted upon. That which is acted upon is obviously the opposite of that which acts. And so action generates a reaction in that which is opposite to it and such a reaction has an intensity commensurate with the intensity of action. It has also to be noted that as is the nature of action so will be the nature of reaction. Thus it is that man experiences certain reactions as painful and certain others as pleasant. Obviously the source of pain or pleasure is to be sought in Action which generates reaction. Reaction is on the plane of effects while Action operates on the plane of causes, thus action is the cause of reaction which is the effect, giving us a sensation of pain or pleasure.

Now it is the common experience of man that

his life fluctuates between these two poles of Pain and Pleasure. This constant fluctuation naturally produces strain and stress in the life of the human individual. He seeks permanence in the midst of these constant fluctuations, but such permanence is denied to him. He realizes that these fluctuations are due to the operation of action and reaction. If he could only be free from this chain of action and reaction he would experience freedom from fluctuation, in other words, freedom from opposites. Thus is awakened in the heart of man a desire to be free from Karma, the Law of Action and Reaction. Karma is looked upon as something terrible, and throughout the ages man is seen making frantic efforts to realize his freedom from Karma. He goes to Guru after Guru, tries various disciplines, performs innumerable rituals, practices virtue after virtue—all in order to be free from Karma. Sometimes he resigns himself to the lot which Karma has given him, hoping that by so doing probably there will be a more favourable effect produced in future in the form of better circumstances. Thus a desire for freedom from Karma is really a desire to be free from Sorrow.

Now the experience of sorrow comes because of the effect produced by action, since action is the cause of reaction. In order to be free from this effect one must naturally be free from action. It is

it—it is what it appears. But an action, like a ceremonial, is indicative of *something* which it has not been able to express. However, a ceremonial, too, can be lifeless if the form is not suggestive of some experience which the ceremonialist has had. To him the form, the symbol, of a ceremonial becomes far more important, than the life, because he is not in contact with this life. In such a ceremonial there is plenty of activity, smart activity, but absolutely no action.

Shri C. Jinarajadāsa says 'The more cultured a man is the more symbolically he lives' The man of *āction* is truly one who lives symbolically and in the realm of symbols, is ever expanding. He needs newer and newer symbols because of the ever fresh experience that he has. An experience is always fresh—it can never be old or stale. And so he puts fresh waters of experience into the instruments of expression—where necessary he discards those instruments that have become inefficient or unresponsive. He, therefore, creates new instruments, fashions new symbols, as a means of conveying his experience.

If our work—professional or otherwise—is a mere activity, it will not have this symbolical quality and, therefore, will be lifeless even though it may be most perfect as to form. If a work cannot suggest to others 'something' which transcends expression, it

is an utter failure inspite of the beauty of its form. An expression must lead us to that which transcends expression. This is what true Art does ; this, indeed, is the function of Action. Activity may, and will, tire us, but an Action can never produce tiredness because it is a 'play' of the experience—a 'play' without any motive. It is motive that produces exhaustion. Pure Action has no motive and is, therefore, ever fresh. Man's regeneration lies in Action ; his degeneration in Activity.

quite obvious that if there is no action there will not be any reaction. And so freedom from Karma amounts to obtaining freedom from action

Is freedom from action possible and if it is how is such freedom to be obtained? It is not necessary to mention here that action is not confined to physical activity. For the purposes of the Law of Karma, every thought, every feeling, every word, as every physical activity, is Action. Thus freedom from Action must mean freedom at all the various levels where karma is generated. Now, is such freedom from Action possible? How can man exist without action? In fact, his very existence is Action. We are told that man cannot raise even his little finger without causing disturbance in the whole universe. The very breathing of man produces changes in the universe. If that is the case freedom from Action is an impossibility. Wherever we exist, whether, on the physical or the super physical plane we ^{act}, for existence is synonymous with Action. Even the perfected human beings are not free from Action, it does not matter on which plane of manifestation they exist. Thus Karma lessness in the sense of freedom from action has to be ruled out.

Now if Action generates Reaction, we have no hope of obtaining freedom from this chain of Action

and Reaction It looks as if by our very existence we are bound to this chain and so must fluctuate between Pain and Pleasure with no possibility of ever going beyond the pairs of opposites And so long as opposites remain so long must we remain a slave to sorrow and suffering created by ceaseless struggle and conflict If this be the case man must reconcile himself to his lot, good, bad or indifferent

Here it would be well for us to examine as to what we mean by reaction What is a Reaction? Obviously it is a response from that which is the opposite of the subject of action It is a response received by the subject due to its action on the object—the object may be on the physical plane or on the super physical plane Now so long as this response is favourable to the subject in other words is in accordance with the expectations of the subject, so long is there no desire on the part of the subject to be free from Karma It is when the response is unfavourable or contrary to one's expectations that a desire to be free from Karma arises Thus a reaction has no meaning save in terms of the recognition given by the subject to a particular response If in the subject there is no 'centre of recognition' (to use Krishnaji's terminology) it is but obvious that for him there is no reaction Reaction therefore pre supposes a centre of recognition in the subject that has generated action

What does a centre of recognition mean? It means a longing for something to happen or a fear lest something might happen. In other words it is longing or fear attached to an action. This means that the action performed has not been complete but has left a trace in the form of a longing or in the form of a fear. If the action had been complete there would have been no centre of recognition in the mind of the subject. It may be noted here that while the centre of factual recognition may and must be there, there will not be any centre of psychological recognition. In other words such an action leaves no psychological memory. It is only an incomplete action that leaves behind traces which form centres of recognition on which responses from the object have their play.

The question here arises. Why are our actions incomplete? Why do we not display complete action? Why do our actions leave traces of longing or fear? A careful examination of this psychological process will convince us that most of our actions spring from the psychological memory of the past. Our actions are incomplete because they are not free actions but dominated by the psychological tendencies of the past. The past has left certain longings and fears in our minds and so our action in the present is coloured by these tendencies. Thus our actions are truly reactions for we react

to our circumstances of life—physical, emotional or mental—in terms of longings or fears left by our previous reactions. We are caught up not in the chain of action and reaction but in a chain of reactions only. We do not act at all, we only react. It is this reaction that generates fresh reaction perpetuating centres of recognition. Every thing that we do or think or feel from this centre of recognition is only a reaction. And all our so called actions are but projections, from our centres of psychological recognition.

Thus it is not action that generates reaction—it is only reaction that produces fresh reaction. For Action that is Pure and Complete, there is obviously no centre of recognition and so no reaction at all. If only we could perform Pure Action there would be for us complete freedom from reaction. So long as we react there is no possibility for us of realizing freedom from Karma. It is only in terms of Pure, Complete Action that Karma lessness is possible. An Action that is pure can never bind—it is reaction that binds. Man's sorrow is not due to action, it is due to reaction. Karma lessness is Pure Action and such Pure Action is possible for each one of us, no matter where we stand on the ladder of evolution.

ACTION AND INACTION

Occultism, in Terms of Modern Theosophical understanding, is essentially a *Call to Work*. Occultists are first of all and last of all Workers. It is not the life of quiet contemplation that they seek but one of strenuous action dedicated to the betterment of the world. "To lift a little of the heavy karma of the world" is the great code of action placed before all true Occultists. To work tirelessly for the cause of 'orphan humanity' is the basis of Occult life. The Occultist is ready to let go the joys of the heaven world in order that he may be available for work so as to lead the suffering humanity from darkness to Light. It is not the life of a recluse but of an efficient and a tireless worker that he seeks. The whole problem of Occultism has been beautifully summed up by C. Jinarājadāsa in the following words :

"Loving action is Divine Wisdom at work, and whoso acts lovingly must inevitably come to the Wisdom."

'Loving action' is thus the keynote of Occultism

The question therefore arises: What is Loving Action? The above statement implies a distinction between action which is loving and action which is devoid of love. Occultists are thus concerned with Action of a particular type. All action does not come under its purview. Action in terms of Occultism must have a quality of Love.

In order to understand this distinctive quality of Occult action it is desirable to know how an Occultist differs from other workers who endeavour to further the cause of human welfare. There are numberless philanthropists in the world who are most tireless in their work. They are remarkably efficient in the execution of the work that is entrusted to them. They constantly dream of human betterment and toil for the fulfilment of this dream night and day. Today we find many movements in the social, educational, cultural, political and economic fields where men and women join together to advance the cause of human fellowship. Does not their work have a quality of Occultism in it? There is no doubt that their work is good. However, to be occult, work has not merely to be good—there must be *something more* to distinguish it from other activities. What is this *something more*?

The work that we do, whether private or public, is mostly a *reaction*, and not action at all. Now reactions can be at various levels. In fact, the point

where a reaction emanates will differ from individual to individual. From things to ideas and from ideas to ideals is the process of progressive reactions. Man reacts at first at the level of things that is, at the physical level. To situations and circumstances of life there can be reactions from different levels. We find many people showing forth reactions purely at the physical level, they are moved by physical objects and by the physical aspects of situations and circumstances. In the same way there are people who display mental reactions—by mind is meant the composite term of thoughts and emotions. Their reactions are thus from the level of ideas. Whatever they do is towards the fulfilment of an idea which they prize and cherish the most. They meet the situations of life from a fixed point which is the *idea to which they hold on at all costs*. All activities are put into the framework of an idea or ideas and so there is an effort to twist or to modify everything in terms of the idea or ideas. It is because of this that in all such reactions there is to be perceived an element of intolerance or dogmatism. The work that is done under the impact of an idea may be good—after all good and bad are relative terms—but it is bound to display a lack of respect for the people whom we profess to serve.

From Ideas we move on to Ideals. This is a progressively higher level of reaction in the sense

that it is more subtle and abstract. Very often we react from an ideological level and this is considered as proper from a spiritual standpoint. But an ideological reaction is still a reaction—it does not differ fundamentally from physical or mental reactions. In a reaction there lacks an element of understanding and without understanding our work can never be *right* although it may be *good*. A loving action can arise only in the background of understanding. An ideological reaction like any other reaction is an attempt to modify a situation without understanding its fundamental and essential nature. We judge a person or situation from the standpoint of certain ethical principles or abstract ideals which we have evolved from our past experiences. Sometimes we take these principles or ideals from sacred books and spiritual or temporal authorities. The ideal becomes our fixed point from where we react. Thus our response to the miseries and problems of life becomes an ideological reaction. We evolve schemes of human betterment in terms of this reaction. The motive behind our work is therefore the fulfilment of an ideal. And what does the fulfilment of an ideal mean? It is successfully putting into a framework a situation or a problem with which we may be dealing. Or it may be the putting of our own behaviour into a particular pattern or framework. So long as a situation a problem or our own

behaviour, eludes such an adjustment to a pattern 'so long do we consider our ideal as not fulfilled. Our acts of service, our philanthropic work, our so called sacrifices for the betterment of others are all indications of this attempt to put life into the straight jacket of ideas and ideals.

Thus our reactions may be physical, mental or ideological. Now a reaction is action with a motive. The motive may be at the physical level or it may be at the ideological level—it may be crude or it may be subtle. A reaction is always based on a pattern or a framework. Its effort is therefore to bottle up life which is ever moving. In a reaction there is a desire to fulfil something. This fulfilment may be physical happiness or it may be ideological satisfaction. Now Love is something which has no motive. Love is its own fulfilment. It is therefore, obvious that an action which has a motive behind it is not a Loving Action. Reaction is thus an action which is devoid of the quality of Love. Our philanthropic work, our acts of service, our dreams of human betterment, our public activities are all mostly reactions and therefore cannot be classed as Loving Action. It is because of this that vested interests are created round about our schemes and plans of service. The work that we do is motivated by some desire for fulfilment—the fulfilment of our pet theories and ideas, the fulfilment of our cherished

dreams and ideals *Light on the Path* very clearly indicates to us what is meant by work that is motivated by a desire for fulfilment. It says

‘ The pure artist who works for the love of his work is sometimes more firmly planted on the right road than the Occultist who fancies he has removed his interest from self, but who has in reality only enlarged the limits of experience and desire, and transferred his interest to the things which concern his larger span of life ’

It is evident that any work done with an interest to the things which concern his larger span of life’ is not Occult work for it lacks the element of Loving Action

What then is Loving Action and how is it performed? In the fourth discourse of the *Bhagavad Gita* there is an instruction given with reference to Action. Here Sri Krishna makes a three fold classification which is important in understanding the problem of Action. He says that one must know the distinction between *Vi-karma* (विकर्म), *Karma* (कर्म) and *Akarma* (अकर्म) Now *Vi-karma* is translated as evil or unlawful karma. It is wrong action or in the terminology which we have used, it may be described as Reaction. *Karma* of course means Action, and *Akarma* is described as Inaction. We

have seen that Loving Action cannot be *Vikarma* or Reaction. We have therefore to understand the distinction between Action and Inaction.

We have seen that only when an action is divested of all its motives that it becomes a Loving Action. Action therefore must arise in a condition of motivelessness. Sometimes the motives of action are very subtle and covered over with euphemisms. Behind high sounding words and phrases there lurks an utterly selfish motive. In order to know all these subtle and non subtle motives a man must continually ask himself the question 'Why is he doing certain actions?' This constant questioning as to the why of every action will bring to the surface all the motives that underlie our activities. When motive after motive which we may have discovered in our behaviour is put aside, there arises a condition of Inaction. It is a condition in which all reactions have been negated because of the motives that underlie them. Inaction is a negative state arrived at because of the putting away of all reactions. When we become aware of the ugly motives that form the basis of all reactions it is but natural that there must arise a cessation of all reactions. N. Sri Ram says

'The spiritual life is a state which comes into existence by itself as we cease from the errors of our ways—ways of thought, motives and outer conduct.

This indeed is a negative state of Inaction coming into existence because of the cessation of motives.

But the cessation of motives or the cessation of reactions does not by itself constitute Action. Inaction only supplies the background for Action. When all reactions cease there is created a condition of motive less ness. It is this condition which forms the Ground for all Action. That which arises in this ground is Pure Action. Inaction is the soil in which alone Action can spring into existence. If our philanthropic work, our acts of service, our daily behaviour, our day today activities are not within the ground of Inaction, they are mere reactions motivated by crude or subtle desire for fulfilment. The state of motive less ness must come into existence from moment to moment so that in the background of Inaction every gesture of ours may become an Occult act. The *Bhagavad Gita* says

"He who seeth inaction in action and action in inaction, he is wise among men, he is a Yogi and performer of all actions" (Discourse IV 18)

Now Inaction apparently is contrary to all instructions of Occultism. If Action is the code of Occult life, inaction must naturally seem contrary to it. How can Inaction and Action be reconciled so as not to violate Occult injunction? Here we

come again to the dual aspect of the spiritual life—the Occult and the Mystic. The path of Mysticism is indeed the path of Inaction—the bringing into existence a state of motive less-ness even as the path of Occultism is that of Action—the bringing into existence a state of tirelessness. One must enter the realm of Inaction in order to perform true Action. Action which is positive can exist only in the background of negativity which is supplied by Inaction. It is the negative state that alone can know the fullness of Love, and anything that springs from this fullness becomes Loving Action.

It is said that it is not *what* the Occultist does that matters, but *how* he does that really matters. He may do the most trivial thing, but when it is done in the background of Inaction even that small act becomes Occult in the true sense of the term. To him there is nothing so small as cannot show forth qualities of Occult action. For him service is not something apart from everyday actions for whatever he does is surcharged with the quality of Love. There are two factors essential for Occult life one that there is a constant background of Inaction, and two that what springs in this soil of Inaction is given increasingly perfect forms.

Inaction and Action constitute the Rhythm of Life representing the elements of rest and work. If agitation excitement, hurry, depression, elation

and such other psychological moods constitute the background for our activities, then we are not performing actions but only indulging in reactions. There must be a perfect repose behind most strenuous action. In Nature there is perfect repose even while she is engaged in creating something great and majestic—in fact all things of Nature seem beautiful to us because they arise from the depths of repose. All our actions will bear the true stamp of Occultism only when there is this deep repose behind all the efficient and useful work that we may be doing. We shall learn repose along the Way of Mysticism, just as we shall learn the building of beautiful forms along the Path of Occultism. Lao Tze, the great Chinese philosopher, gives us the true meaning of Action when he says “He who stands on tiptoe is not steady. He who holds the legs stiffly cannot walk”. Action is possible only in the background of repose, all else is reaction which binds us to the wheel of sorrow.

THE PATH OF WOE

The Spiritual Path has often been described as the 'Path of Woe'—a path of constant struggle and of rigorous discipline. The bliss of spiritual life comes only at the end and the end may be after many lives of hard toil and acute suffering. It is also maintained by many that there is a direct path of liberation on which man may experience the Eternal Bliss, but, then such a path of liberation is declared to be a selfish path not meant for one who aspires to become a Servant of Humanity. There are many who say "The Path of Liberation is not for us, it can wait, for we are engaged in serving those who are weak and down trodden. The idea of being liberated does not appeal to us"

Now there seems to be a great deal of confusion between what is known as Personal Salvation and what is described as Liberation. Personal Salvation is a desire to be free from the cycle of birth and death it is a desire to live in the bliss of some heavenly existence, it is a desire to escape the ceaseless demand for Action while one lives in the world with people at varying levels of existence. Whether

there is anything like personal salvation or not is a moot philosophical question and we need not go into it. It is however a fact that millions of people in the world, belonging to different religions, dream of such a salvation in which they will be utterly free from all actions.

But Liberation has nothing to do with these dreams of personal salvation. When man realizes that action is the very integral part of life, that to live is to act, he begins to wonder why he is not able to act in the right manner. In other words, since life is relationship, what is the secret of happy relationship? When man inquires into his own unhappiness and into the unhappiness of others he begins to realize that there is something fundamentally wrong with the way people are related to each other. In fact problems of life are essentially problems of relationship. Sooner or later, man begins to move in search of the ways and means of establishing right relationship.

It is as he moves on in quest of happy relationship, or right action that he discovers certain obstacles within his own psychological nature which prevent him from establishing happy relationship with others. When he recognizes these obstacles within his nature, he feels an ever increasing urge to remove them. In other words, he wants to be liberated from the limitations that prevent him from

establishing happy relationship. Liberation is therefore with reference to the limitations to right action. It is not an escape from action, on the contrary, it is a quest for right action, a search for that Ground in which true action is possible. Liberation thus differs fundamentally from personal salvation. While the latter proposes to run away from action, the former faces the problems of action.

Can liberation be postponed? If one is engrossed in work it is all the more necessary for him to be liberated from those limitations which prevent him from acting rightly. Where the problem of liberation is put aside on the plea that one is engaged in work, it becomes noticeable that gradually it is the work that suffers. With the problem of liberation unattended to, it is the quality of work that invariably goes down. This happens when the worker becomes far more important than the work—the worker begins to display himself in the work with all his ugly psychological moods. It is thus that pettiness, jealousy, envy, self gratification, self fulfilment, irritability, personal disappointments and several such factors are introduced into the work. In other words, the work becomes coloured with one's own psychological projections. These projections may not always be conscious, many a time they are unconscious, but conscious or unconscious they affect the quality of work. When this happens

the worker uses the work as a means towards his own fulfilment. It is but obvious that our work must deteriorate if we do not remove the obstructions that stand in the way of right action.

All of us do recognise the need for removing these obstacles and, to that extent, accept the value of liberation. But we believe that liberation can come only at the end of the journey when, gradually, bit by bit, we wear away the various obstacles. In order to remove obstacles we discipline ourselves and take ourselves seriously 'in hand', but we realize that this is a slow process when life after life, with ceaseless effort, we will be able to so modify the particles of our various bodies that no psychological projections will mar our work. And so we must wait till some day in the distant future when due to the attainment of liberation we shall be able to act rightly and thus establish happy relationship with our environment. Until that day, we must reconcile ourselves to the fact that the work must suffer because of psychological projections. It is a curious thing that while we are committed to work, we do not mind the gradual deterioration in the quality of our work. Does not the deterioration of individual work affect the progress of the *Great Work* itself? It obviously does, and so, for a worker the problem of liberation is urgent and immediate. For one who is not interested in work, this problem can

certainly be postponed; he can play about with the idea of 'personal salvation'. Work and Liberation are indeed two sides of the same medallion. They cannot be separated one from the other, for any such separation will immediately affect the quality of work.

The question is: If the problem of liberation is immediate and urgent, have we the means to tackle it here and now? It is here that we must consider another great confusion that has been imported into this problem. It is the non-recognition of a distinction between Liberation and Perfection. Liberation is freedom from limitation, Perfection is the expression of that freedom in behaviour. Liberation is, therefore, the giving up of limitations, while Perfection is the acquiring of capacity after capacity to express the freedom which one has realized. Liberation thus deals with the refinement of instruments, the sharpening of tools, the replacement of the bodily particles. Liberation is 'seeing' the end, Perfection is the expression of joy that one has experienced in 'seeing' the end. Now, to see a thing is to be one with it—it is not identification, it is non-duality. When the seer and the seen are separate, the act of seeing is only the perception of an image. When a subject looks at an object, he sees only an aspect of the object, not the object itself. And so, if Liberation means 'seeing' the end it obviously means being one with the end.

Light on the Path says: 'Thou can'st not tread the Path unless thou hast become one with it' Now in this sentence has been described both Liberation and Perfection, for to be one with the Path is Liberation, while to tread it is Perfection And so Liberation must precede Perfection—it is not the end of the process of Perfection; on the contrary, it ought to be at the very beginning of the Path of Perfection, for, otherwise, we cannot tread the Path 'Even at life's beginning to sense life's end'—this indeed is Liberation.

Is it possible for one to *see* the end—to be one with it? Why are we not able to see the end? Obviously there is something which obstructs our vision The ray of light emanating from the End seems to get distorted due to some factor which interferes with it In order to *see*, all that we need to do is to remove this obstruction, to put a stop to the process of interference Thus it is not a question of acquiring something It is, on the contrary, a question of giving up something Now when do we give up a thing? Obviously, we give up only when we are aware of the fact that the thing we are holding is useless or dangerous. When a person is aware that he is holding a poisonous snake in his hand, he has not got to make an effort to drop the snake. For giving up, therefore, we need awareness of what we are doing Awareness brings cessation. Here

we must understand a distinction between recognition and awareness. We may intellectually recognise many things—but that is not awareness. It is by a process of self analysis that we move from recognition to awareness. The mind that recognizes an obstruction tries all the time to by pass the obstruction, it seeks escape from limitations. But the mind that is aware of obstruction has come to a dead stop with reference to that obstruction. It cannot move further, and so in the moment of its highest tension it naturally comes to a stop. In a mind that is tense there has come about a cessation of the thought process. In other words, the mind has given up its projectional activities. When this happens, there is nothing to distort the vision—there is nothing to keep the subject and the object separate. The man *sees* the end, for the subject-object duality has vanished. This is the hour of man's Liberation with reference to anything that obstructs his Vision.

In this article we do not propose to go into the question as to the process of self analysis which leads us from recognition to awareness. We, however, wish to note that for a person who has become one with the Path, the treading of that Path becomes a matter of never-ending joy. The Path of Perfection ceases to be a Path of Woe, it becomes a Path of Joy, for he is now concerned with *expressing* that which he has *experienced*. The

process of expression needs refinement and sharpening of tools it needs a transformation in the vibratory rate of the bodily particles. But this work receives a new significance because of the joy and the thrill of liberation. Ordinarily, in our spiritual life, we have to contend against two elements—the Distortion of the Vision and the Restriction of the Vehicles. The battle against the restriction of the vehicles—which indeed is the treading of the Path—becomes very trying and exhausting because it is conducted in the back ground of a distorted Vision. The discipline required for this work of sharpening and refining the vehicles becomes too exacting and so the result is that many aspirants leave the discipline after sometime. There are others who go on with the discipline in a mechanical sort of way without real enthusiasm for the work of training the vehicles. This happens because the distorted vision supplies an uninspiring back ground in which to carry on this work of training. A new background is necessary and this can come only when the vision is undistorted—in other words when the obstacles to seeing' the end are put aside. It is Liberation that corrects the Vision, it is Perfection that refines the instrument.

When the process of Perfection goes on within the background of Liberation the treading of the Path becomes a matter of Joy, where this does not

happen, we speak of the Path of Woe. There is a law, about which we read in Theosophical literature, which says "Function precedes organ"; and so the process of building up the organs must be carried on under the influence of the Function, the inner Impulse, the undisturbed and the undistorted Vision of Life. The building up of the organ is the polishing of the instruments, the transforming of the bodily matter, the change of the physical, the astral and the mental particles. If this is done without a contact with the new Function, the new Impulse, the work will not only exhaust us, but there will also be failure after failure. It is because of this that we describe the Path as full of woe and suffering. The reconstruction of the bodily particles will be an affair of never-ending joy if we can only 'see' the end and become one with the Path.

THE MIDDLE PATH

Twenty-five centuries ago the Lord Buddha gave to the world his great and profound message concerning the Middle Path. This message is full of deepest significance to the men and women of the present generation. We are still struggling with the problem of sorrow and suffering, nay, the problem seems to have become more acute in this age of scientific and mechanical progress. If we could understand the mystery of the Middle Path we would perhaps be able to discover a new approach to the problems of life.

What is Lord Buddha's message of the Middle Path? Is the Middle Path a compromise between right and wrong, between true and false? The *At the Feet of the Master* says that "Between right and wrong, Occultism knows no compromise." If the Middle Path advocates a line of compromise does it not differ from the fundamental teaching of the Occult Path? In the *Bhagavad Gita*, Lord Shri Krishna asks Arjuna to "abandon all duties (Dharmas)" and go to Him for shelter. Similarly the Lord Jesus Christ instructed his disciples to renounce all and

follow him. This idea of complete renunciation or abandonment appears to be contrary to the precept of the Lord Buddha concerning the Middle Path, if this Path is supposed to indicate a way of compromise. The two extremes of life may be described as God and Mammon. It is but obvious that there cannot be a compromise between these two. The Middle Path surely cannot mean a mixture of spirituality and worldliness. And yet the Lord Buddha did instruct his disciples to keep away from the path of extremes.

What then is meant by treading the Middle Path? Is it possible to define or describe the Middle Path with reference to anything? A middle path obviously represents a line drawn in the middle, dividing a road into two equal parts. Can any one walk on this line? It is but evident that any treading on this line would mean an inclination either to the right or to the left. The line which cuts a road in the middle is an imaginary line—a line in the mathematical sense which has length but no breadth. Now, one cannot tread on a line which has no breadth, and a line ceases to be a line once the quality of breadth is given to it. Any attempt to tread the middle path, meaning the line which divides a road into two, is therefore futile. He who walks on this middle path is sure to incline himself either to the right or to the left, which means to one of

the extremes Leaving aside the simile of the road, can one draw a line with reference to the problem that faces him in such a way that he strikes a middle path? He can do so if by the Middle Path is meant a line of compromise so that he takes a little of this and a little of that and marches on This is the path of expediency, of opportunism, which surely was not indicated in Lord Buddha's message

The Middle Path is truly that line which has length but no breadth that point which has position but no magnitude Any attempt to define this line or this point would give it breadth or magnitude The Middle Path is indeed a Point of Equilibrium a point so delicately poised that even the slightest movement would disturb it It is the razor edged path, if path it can be called, about which the ancient *Upanishads* speak The Middle Path cannot be described or defined, it has to be experienced by each man for himself It is not a well laid out path along which an aspirant can walk It is a path which has to be carved out from moment to moment It is a state of poise, of equilibrium, of harmony about which the *Bhagavad Gita* speaks In terms of Time, it is the intangible Present with the Past and the Future as extremes The Present is a point which has no magnitude, but it has a position which can be experienced, not defined or described The Present is so delicately poised that even a thought concerning

it creates a disturbance so that what is caught in the process of thinking is not the Present, but the Past.

To tread the Middle Path is indeed to live in the Present. The Past and the Future do not exist, and so, truly speaking, living can be only in the Present. It is the simple truth to which the Lord Buddha drew the attention of His hearers by asking them to tread the Middle Path. But if the Present is intangible, how to live in it? The *Light on the Path* says "Hold fast to that which has neither substance nor existence." Treading of the Middle Path or living in the Present is indeed to hold fast to *something* which has neither substance nor existence. How is this to be done?

How does living in the present differ from a mere drift? The life of drift needs no thinking or planning. Did the Lord Buddha advocate a life of drift when he talked of the Middle Path? Do not the impulsive people always live in the present? People whose consciousness functions at the emotional level never take into consideration the past and the future. At one moment they may be jubilant, at the next moment they are in the depths of depression. Is this what is meant by living in the present? The Present can be experienced only from moment to moment, for this moment cannot be carried over. The process of carrying over immediately introduces an element of the past or the future. How does

living from moment to moment differ from a mere impulsive existence ?

Here it is necessary for us to understand what we exactly mean by time. There is what is known as the clock time or the chronological time. It does not need any explanation for we know what it is. But there is also another aspect of time—the one which is experienced by the individual, what Bertrand Russell calls the "private time." It is indeed the psychological time, made up of the psychological content projected by the individual on the clock time. The feeling which an individual has of "time flying" or "time dragging on" is due to the psychological content projected on the clock time. Psychological time is therefore private to the individual. In considering the question of living in the Present we have, therefore, to take note of the chronological present as well as the psychological present. One can live in the chronological present with all the factors of psychological past and future operating, but one cannot live in the psychological present with the psychological content of the past and the future functioning in one's consciousness. For the person living in the psychological present, the past and the future exist only at the chronological level, that is, they are only matters of clock time bereft of all psychological content, while the person who lives in the chronological present has all the burden of the

psychological past and the future pressing him down—he is rooted in the past although living in the chronological present. The past motivates him and thus is created the future for which he psychologically pines. And so his chronological present is all the time coloured and moulded by the psychological past and the future. He is therefore drifting in the current of continuity which moves from the past to the future. Burdened by the past and rushing towards the future he naturally misses the 'real present'.

The man of chronological present lives at the emotional or pre logical level where the thinking process lies dormant or it has been dulled. He is a man of immediate reactions. It is this *immediacy* which gives an impression that he is intuitive, but it must be remembered that the immediacy is with reference to reactions and all reactions emanate from the past or its extension which is the future. He is the man of Emotional Now for whom the chronological past and the future have for the time being been obliterated.

But the man of psychological present lives at a level where the thinking process has come to a stop, where all mentation has ceased. He is a man of immediate action for there is no centre of psychological recognition in his consciousness from where he can react. He lives in the Eternal Now, for the psychological past and the future have been for the

time being obliterated for him

It should be remembered that the difference between the two—the one living in the chronological present and the other in the psychological present—is the difference between Reaction and Action. There is immediacy in the case of both, for that is what is meant by the *present*. But while in the one there is immediate reaction, in the other there is immediate action. This is the difference between impulse and intuition.

Since treading the Middle Path means living in the Present, it is but obvious that such a life is of immediate action and not of reaction. Action is always spontaneous, natural and therefore unmotivated. It is not a means to some end which has to be realized in the future as is the case with all reactions. Action is from moment to moment since it is outside the process of continuity built up by the past and the future. This indeed is the true spiritual state where a man acts but does not react. Action is possible only on the Middle Path, that is, in the Present. Even a slight deviation from the Middle Path brings us into the operating influence of the past and the future where arise all reactions. Such deviations or distractions come to a man for whom the past, and therefore the future, are full of psychological content, of unfulfilled desires and aspirations. To live in the present or to tread the Middle Path is

indeed to be free from the chain of reactions, the chain of cause and effect—to be Karmaless—for he who is Karmaless, for whom every action is complete, needing no future for its fulfilment.

In the world there are people who may be described as utterly cynical in their attitude to life. These are the people rooted in the past who would like the past to continue. They are suspicious of attempts to modify the past. They are at the level of habitual continuity having no faith in the improvement of human nature. There are others who, though rooted in the past, strive at the improvement of those conditions which characterize the past. They work at the modification of the past and therefore are dominated by the future. They are the people who function at the level of modified continuity. They are the idealists of the world, those working for certain ethical codes—individual or social. All idealists have an ethical approach to life aiming at the modification of the past and thus attempting to create a happier future. There is, however, a third group of people, those who show forth a spiritual state in their lives. They are those who live in the present, who tread the Middle Path, avoiding the extremes of the past and the future, of both habitual and modified continuity. There is a great deal of difference between the spiritual and the ethical people. Dr. S. Radhakrishnan rightly says :

The spiritual is not an extension of the ethical, it is a new dimension altogether, dealing with things eternal

The ethical approach is that of an idealist functioning within the sphere of continuity and concerned with the modification of the past. The spiritual approach deals with the present where alone Reality can be contacted. Does this mean that the spiritual man has no concern with morality or ethics? Dr Radhakrishnan says

Till the spiritual life is won, the law of morality appears to be an external command which man has to obey with effort and pain. But when the light is obtained, it becomes the internal life of the spirit, working itself out unconsciously and spontaneously

To a man of spirituality, morality is not a pattern to be imitated but a life to be naturally and spontaneously expressed. To him ethical life is not for realizing something, but for expressing that which he has realized. His realization is the contact with Reality made possible to him because of the treading of the Middle Path

How to live in the present where alone Reality can be contacted? It is our common experience that if anything is brought very close to the eye it can hide from our view even the highest mountain. As I write these lines I see the great range of the

Himalayas in front of me. Sometimes on a clear day the distant snow peaks of Kanchangunga are perfectly visible. But the visibility of the snow peaks is not dependent upon any particular height. Sometimes these peaks are visible even from the valleys provided there is no obstruction, sometimes they are not visible even from a great height because of some small obstruction—a small hill or a tree hiding the view. Thus, while a man in the valley is able to see the wonderful snowy peaks of Himalayas, a person who has climbed the top of a hill may not be able to have this beautiful view. In order to have the view it is not the height that is required, it is the obstruction that matters, and the nearer the obstruction is to one's eyes, the greater the possibility of the view being shut off.

Now this is exactly the case in our spiritual life when we are deprived of the great VISION of Reality. There is nothing so close to us as our "I" and it is this which obstructs the view for us. There is wonder and beauty all around us but we are denied this VISION because of the "I" standing close to us even as the small hillock or the house or the tree obstructing the view of the snowy peaks just lying in front of us. It is this obstruction which prevents us from living in the present. The present is all the time hidden from our view. Thus do we miss the Middle Path moving on the extremes of the Past

WHAT IS SPIRITUAL LIFE ?

The first two lines of a poem which C Jinaraja dasa wrote in 1927 state the problem of spiritual life thus

—What is the spritual life, my friend ?
E'en at life's beginning to sense life's end

Is it possible to sense life's end at the beginning of life ? How does this sensing of life's end help ? Does it mean that once we have sensed it our struggles are over ? If spiritual life is such a simple matter why have seers and sages described the spiritual path as one of acquiring virtue after virtue in life after life ?

It is indeed necessary for us to understand this problem of spiritual life in all its fullness for it is a problem with which we are intimately concerned. Usually when we speak of spiritual life it is with reference to the weaknesses or limitations that we have in our character. We struggle hard to eliminate these weaknesses so that it may be possible for us to show forth the splendour of spiritual life. We find this path of eliminating weaknesses a tiresome one as we have to toil day after day. At

first we submit to these weaknesses ; then we follow the path of suppression and later, we go along the path of sublimation. But all these do not take us very far ; our bitter struggles still remain. While we are on guard, these weaknesses are kept away, but in unguarded moments they come to us with their violent attacks, sometimes openly, at other times in a disguised form. It is this constant struggle against weaknesses which causes frustration, tiredness, exhaustion in our psychological life

Can these be avoided ? For if frustration and tiredness are to be our lot on the path of spiritual life, it is possible that we may give up the struggle, or at the end of our spiritual attainment we shall have no enthusiasm for life, having been completely exhausted due to ceaseless struggle

The occult instruction says that one cannot tread the Path until one has become one with it. Perhaps in considering this, rather paradoxical statement, a little more deeply, we may be able to find a new approach to spiritual life. The statement is paradoxical because if one has become one with the Path where is the necessity to tread it ? And again, how can a spiritual aspirant become one with the Path unless he treads it ? It is in understanding this paradox that one comes to the essence of spiritual life.

To be one with the goal before treading the path to it, seems utterly ridiculous. And, yet, that

is what we are required to do. Is it possible? Supposing an artist were to say 'Let me first of all paint a landscape and after that I shall perceive the beauty of that landscape', we would naturally consider such an artist as totally mad for how can one create anything beautiful before seeing the beauty of that thing first? It is only when we have perceived the beauty that we can create the beautiful. And how does the artist perceive beauty? By becoming one with the object of beauty—it is only in transcending subject-object quality that a person perceives—'sees' the beauty. In spiritual life we are concerned with expressing the beautiful in our behaviour. The question is, 'How can we express the beautiful in our behaviour unless we have first become one with beauty? This is what C. Jinarajadasa describes as 'e'en at life's beginning to see life's end.' Seeing life's end is not an intellectual conception, nor building an image of life's goal. To see a thing is to be one with it—all other seeing is but dwelling on the image created by the mind. To see life's goal is to commune with the Transcendence.

If we become one with the Path where is then the necessity to tread it? Are all our problems of spiritual life solved the moment we become one with the Path? Ask the artist what happens when once he has perceived the Beauty? He wishes to convey the joy of that experience to others. But how can he

convey? He naturally needs a medium of expression to convey his experience to others. For this he must learn technique, he must go through discipline, he must sit at the feet of his teacher. But does he mind this? Every step of the discipline every mode of technique is a joy to him, for he feels an inner compulsion to express himself. The expression is as it were the '*leela*' of his own experience. He voluntarily accepts all restrictions of expression—as every expression is a restriction—for to him every sacrifice becomes a joy. It is a joy because of inner experience of beauty. To such a man learning technique after technique of expression is no tiresome routine. He enjoys every step of it because he is enabled thus to express the indescribable joy he has experienced while communing with Beauty.

The position of the spiritual man who has become one with the Path is exactly the same. To him the problem of spiritual life resolves itself in terms of expressing the joy that he has experienced on becoming one with the Path. The treading of the Path then becomes learning the technique of expression. The practice of virtue after virtue is not for realizing the beauty of the 'goal' but for expressing the beauty which has been perceived. When the technique of expression functions in the background of one's experience it loses all its unpleasantness—in fact such a technique then becomes the

play of the spiritual aspirant. Thus the essence of spiritual life is seeing the goal, being one with the Path, communing with the Transcendence. But where technique is undertaken without this communion there the man is bound to feel frustration, tiredness and psychological exhaustion, due to the routine which for him is bereft of any meaning.

Thus realization is at the beginning of the Path and not at the end of it. This indeed is the essence of spiritual life.

TIME, SPACE AND CAUSATION

Manifestation is always a field of restriction, for here one has to deal with varying densities of matter. As the Life wave descends lower and lower in manifestation it has to make its way through numerous barriers created by the nature of the material conditions pertaining to the plane where it wishes to function. The Life wave has immense possibilities within It but these cannot be brought out all at once due to the conditions of material encasement. In the ancient Hindu philosophy these barriers have been classified in three broad divisions: Time, Space and Causation. In the world of manifestation we are circumscribed by Space, by Time and by Causation or Movement. Man is continually seeking freedom from the limitations imposed by these three factors. He feels separated from his object of love or inspiration by Space as well as by Time. And the continual movement which seems to be the nature of the world causes much distress to him. He tries to seek a fixed point in the midst of this constant movement, but he fails again and again.

The manifested world is indeed the realm of the Becoming. Here man tries all the time to "become" something. This Becoming is to be seen at various levels—material, emotional, mental and spiritual. Man is never content with what he has—he seeks more and more, more of wealth, more of affection, more of knowledge, more of virtues—more of everything that he prizes most in life. It is this running after the 'more' which produces unhappiness in his life. He struggles hard to achieve his objective but his will is pitted against the mighty will of Nature.

The will of Nature may be variously described—but the most common description of it is *Karma*. We want to do so many things but our *Karma* prevents us from doing those things. Karma comes to us in various forms—illness, poverty, domestic troubles, weaknesses, incapacities, lack of opportunities and so on. We have no control over them, for they are the conditioning factors of our life, given to us as an inheritance from the past. We struggle against *Karma* and try to modify these conditions but there are more failures than successes along this line. We score a victory over *Karma* in one direction but *Karma* scores victories over us in other directions. We may seem to be taking four steps forward in evolution but in some other part of our being we may be taking five steps backward. This move-

ment forward and backward, continually goes on. If we 'progress' mentally we seem to 'regress' emotionally, and so, on the whole, we hardly move at all. At the end of an incarnation we are more or less where we were at the beginning of it.

Karma obviously seems to be obstructing our path and these obstructions are in the form of Space, Time and Causation. Ever since man became conscious of these barriers, he has been battling against them, trying to overcome them so that his path may be smooth. Without the removal of these barriers he naturally feels unhappy and frustrated. He feels that Space and Time keep him away from the realization of his dreams of happiness. And the constant movement or flux snatches away from him even the little joy and happiness that he sometimes experiences. He cannot therefore be happy unless, and until he is able to resolve the difficulties created by these three fundamental factors of his life.

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In the course of the last three centuries Science—physical science—has come to the aid of man. Through its many discoveries it is dealing with the problem of Space. The vast space of the universe has been and still is, a powerful challenge to science. It is trying to fathom space to conquer it, to bring it within the control of man. It is trying to compete with the speed of light so that

aeroplanes moving at that tremendous speed are being considered as a possibility. Science is thus working hard at the removal of space barrier. Earth is now too small for its field ; it has turned its gaze to Mars and the Moon. The challenge of physical space is therefore being dealt with most vigorously by science. To go to the other end of the world is now a matter of a few hours. Radio, television and aeroplane have reduced physical distance. With the greater and greater advance of science the problem of physical space will probably be no problem at all.

Just as science deals with the problem of Space Occultism, which is an extension of science, deals with the problem of Time. After all Time is only invisible space—the dimensions of space which we are not able to see are described by us as Time. For the two dimensional being the third dimension constitutes Time, similarly to us, three dimensional beings, the fourth dimension is represented by Time. We regard those who are dead as 'gone'—not *here* in space. The clairvoyant, who has the necessary occult powers, is able to see the dead because he is responsive to a higher dimension of space. Occultism therefore deals with higher and higher dimensions of space, which means, it deals with Time. The occultist is able to look back into the past and similarly peep into the future. We refer to past as

looking backward and to future as looking forward, but backward and forward are only spatial terms. There is therefore no fundamental difference between Time and Space, just as there is no fundamental difference between physical science and occult science. Occultism is indeed an extension of sense-perception. The Yogic disciplines of various types aim at refining the senses and extending their range of perception. With extension in the range of perception, naturally more and more dimensions of space are visible to us. Just as Science deals with Space, Occultism deals with the problem of Time with its unique methods in sense extensions.

But while science deals with physical Space, Occultism deals with chronological Time. To reduce chronological time is indeed the field of occult science. To achieve in the Fourth Round that which would normally be achieved in the Seventh Round is indeed a matter of chronological time. Dr Besant has stated somewhere that Yoga is evolution crushed in the palm of the hand. To shorten the period of evolution is indeed the work of Yoga or Occultism and this obviously is concerned with the question of chronological Time.

But are physical space and chronological time the real barriers to spiritual life? Space and time are indeed subjective experiences. We become conscious of them only in the background.

of our psychological state. Ordinarily space and time do not matter to us at all—it is only when our psychological state is projected into them that we become conscious of their limiting qualities. Time appears to us as long or short according to our psychological state. Similarly distance created by space seems to us great or small in accordance with our psychological condition. Thus into the chronological time and physical space there enters something which creates a sense of limitation. What is this something?

In order to understand this we must go to the third term of the Hindu philosophy which is Causation. Causation pre-supposes change or movement. And change implies a continuity of existence. It is a process of continual becoming. Time and Space—chronological and physical respectively—are only forms of relationship but into these forms there enters a content which is brought by Causation. Time and Space by themselves would not prove limitations or barriers to man but for the fact that an element is introduced into their functioning which utterly transforms their nature. With the entry of this new factor, physical space and chronological time assume a new significance. What is this new factor which Causation introduces?

Causation indicates continual movement from cause to effect. It therefore represents the process

of Becoming. This is known as the process of Cosmic Will over which man has no control. Movement is the very nature of *Samsār*—the manifested world—and man seems to be only a plaything in the hands of this process. Causation means inter-dependability of relationships. This inter dependence makes us subject to the currents and counter currents of this relationship. There seems to be a Cosmic Plan to which man must blindly submit because of this factor of Causation which is an integral part of the world process. Thus there enters into the consciousness of man the feeling that he is not free, but bound to a process of movement, the cycle of birth and death. Determinism seems to be at the root of the world process and man cannot escape its requirements. It is this consciousness of being determined by an external force which introduces in man numerous psychological complications. Since he is not free but determined by a Will over which he has no control, he feels that the evolutionary process is too long and tedious, full of sorrow and suffering. In this background physical space and chronological time assume new significance for they are invested with a psychological mood which arises in an atmosphere of determinism. Thus Causation supplies the psychological content to Space and Time making them conditioning factors in man's life.

It has, however, to be understood that Becoming

can be with regard to something which is Becoming cannot arise out of non-existence. In fact the process of Becoming which is evolution has no meaning save in terms of the Being. Without an experience of the Being the process of Becoming seems meaningless. And it is this meaningless movement the cycle of birth and death, which causes sorrow and suffering to the human individual. The continuity of becoming which Causation is, reduces itself to a mechanical process creating in its turn the problems of Time and Space. Through Becoming man tries to reach out to something which will give him freedom from the endless cycle of births and deaths. But such freedom is not in the hands of Becoming to give. He struggles against the Will of Nature and tries to establish his mastery over the process of Becoming. There is no wonder, he fails again and again for he demands of Becoming that which it is not in a position to give.

Becoming is but an expression of the Being and so in order to understand the meaning of Becoming, one must step out of its cycle of continuity. On the plane of Becoming one can never understand its meaning. Man must step out of the process of Becoming in order to understand its meaning. When man knows the Being the Becoming ceases to be a problem. Now it is the function of Mysticism to enable us to have a glimpse of the Being in the light

of which the process of Becoming is rendered full of meaning. Then causation becomes only a procession of events, a particular sequence of happenings, not an external force determining man's life. The sequence of events does not then appear as determinism at all. To such a man, Occultism teaches how to reduce the chronological time so that the fullness of Being may be expressed most effectively in the realm of the Becoming.

Occultism and Mysticism are the two sides of a medallion. One deals with Space-Time, while the other deals with its content which is Causation.

THE GOOD, THE TRUE AND THE BEAUTIFUL

The students of Eastern as well as Western philosophies are familiar with the concepts of the Good, the True and the Beautiful given to the world by Plato. In India these concepts have been known as *Shivam*, *Sityam* and *Sundiram*. What do these concepts mean? They no doubt represent the highest peaks of mental thinking, they are, as it were, the ultimates of the Mind. But heights of mental thinking are relative so that each person at his level of understanding will come to his own concepts of the Good, the True and the Beautiful. There are no Ultimate concepts of the Good, the True and the Beautiful laid down anywhere by any prophet or philosopher. There is no fixed standard by which to judge whether a thing or an event is Good, True or Beautiful. These ultimates of the Mind differ from age to age and from individual to individual. A thing regarded as beautiful by one individual is not necessarily beautiful for somebody else. The same principle of relativity applies to the concepts of the True and the Good. Thus these three concepts are circumscribed within

the framework of Time and Space. If they belong to the realm of Time and Space, surely they are not Eternal. The words True, Good and Beautiful may be used in all ages but their *content* will differ in accordance with the conditions of Time and Space.

In our common philosophical thinking, however, we have regarded these concepts as the attributes of Reality. Now if they constitute Reality they should be regarded as Eternal Concepts and not subject to the conditions of Time and Space. But we have seen that the content of these three concepts differs from age to age and from individual to individual. The question then is: To what do they refer? Are they not attributes of Reality?

The fundamental point to be considered here is: Can one postulate any attribute with reference to Reality? It is but obvious that attributes can be only with regard to that which is manifested, the Unmanifest can have no attributes. The moment we give attributes to the Unmanifest, it is no longer the Unmanifest. Truly did Lao Tze say: 'The Tao which can be expressed is not the Eternal Tao.' The attribute of a thing is its expression. The Reality which can be expressed in terms of its attributes is certainly not the Eternal the Unmanifest. And so, to say that the Good, the True and the Beautiful—the *Shyam* the *Satyam* and the *Sundarim*—are the attributes of Reality is not

correct Every attribute is a negation of Reality for nothing positive can be stated with regard to the Eternal and the Unmanifest

It is stated that the Good, the True and the Beautiful constitute the Archetypes, the concepts of the Divine Mind. The Archetype is the "far off divine event to which all creation moves" The Archetype is thus the goal fixed by the Solar Logos for his creation Everything in the universe consciously or unconsciously tends to approximate to this Archetype In fact the whole process of evolution is nothing but a movement towards the Archetype Now a goal has a fixed position it has a location. C Jinarajadasa says in his *First Principles of Theosophy*

It is on the fifth or Cosmic Mental plane that there exists as a definite Thought Form the Great Plan of the evolution of all types of life and form in all our seven planes, this Plan is the Thought of the Logos Himself of how evolution shall proceed from its beginning to its end In this "Mind of the Logos" are the "Ideas" or "Archetypes" discussed by Plato

Thus the Archetypes are of the world of manifestation even though this realm be on a very lofty plane. The Plan is a pattern evolved by the Logos out of His own Vision of Reality. But the Plan or the Thought-Form is not the same as Reality

Itself. Our thought-forms are but expressions of ourselves. We transcend every such expression, even the loftiest. Similarly the Thought Forms of the Logos are His expressions. It is but obvious that Reality transcends even the loftiest expressions of the Logos. Thus if the Good, the True and the Beautiful refer to the Archetypes they cannot constitute Reality. Reality, obviously, is other than these concepts of the Good, the True and the Beautiful.

If they are not the attributes of Reality, since no attributes can be posited of Reality, what do these concepts mean? We have stated that they are the ultimates of the Mind or the normal consciousness of an individual. They constitute the heights to which man's normal consciousness can go and since Reality transcends the normal consciousness they cannot be the attributes of Reality. What do the ultimates of the mind or the heights of normal consciousness mean? They may be termed as the Points of Departure. They are the openings in the normal consciousness, windows from where the Vision of Transcendence is made possible. Such openings are indeed the ultimates of normal consciousness as there is nothing in front of them, there is nothing to obstruct the view. They are the points from where a clear, unobstructed, undistorted view is possible. How can the Good, the True and the

Beautiful be called openings in the normal consciousness, the points of departure from Immanence to Transcendence ?

Our world of Immanence is peopled by things, persons, and ideas. There is nothing in the manifested universe which cannot come in one or the other of these categories. Now things, persons and ideas may become blank and solid walls hiding the transcendental view or they may become openings or doors and windows revealing the transcendental view to our gaze. It is in the latter capacity that things, persons and ideas become for us Points of Departure.

Sometimes an object, a human face, a scene in nature conveys to us a vision of indescribable beauty. We are fascinated by it and are almost speechless in front of it. Why does this happen ? Sometimes the same objects and faces that had seemed to us ordinary suddenly seem to shine out with a wonderful brilliance. What has made this brilliance ? This happens only when the thing, the object, the human face, the scene in nature has become for us a point of departure. It is no longer a blank wall but a window through which we look at the wonderful vision vouchsafed to us. Many a time we close down this opening with our psychological projections, with our desire to possess what we have seen. Then it is that the object or the human face which had seemed to us heavenly be-

comes ordinary and loses for us all charm. It is when a thing or a human face becomes a point of departure that we call it Beautiful. Beauty is therefore a point of departure with reference to things, human faces, scenes of nature—in other words with reference to all objects of the physical world.

In a similar way Goodness refers to points of departure in connection with human relationships. Sometimes we are greatly attracted by humility or courage or affection displayed by an individual in his relationship with others. It is then that the particular virtue has become for us a point of departure revealing to us a world of new dimensions. We call this Point of Departure by the name Goodness. Sometimes even a weakness can become a point of departure for us so that we have a new vision of the individual through the weakness that he displays. Truly speaking we condemn the behaviour of others only when these points of departure have been closed down by our own psychological projections. When human relationship becomes a point of departure we are greatly thrilled by the behaviour of people that we see. It is through this Point of Departure which is Goodness that we are enabled to look into a world of happy relationship between individuals and groups of individuals.

There is a Point of Departure which may be termed as Truth when an idea, a thought, a concept,

a mental image reveals to us a new dimension of understanding Every idea that we come across is not Truth—it does not have the compelling power of Truth An idea arrests our attention when there is, as it were, “an opening” in it so that we see a transcendental world through it All ideas can reveal to us something of that Transcendence provided they are made into Points of Departure Through a desire to possess or through our psychological projections we turn an idea into a blank wall so that the Transcendental world is completely shut off from our view

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Thus Truth, Goodness and Beauty are points of departure from ideas, human relationships and things or objects of the physical world They are not the attributes of Reality—for Reality can have no attributes When the manifested world—of things, persons and ideas—becomes a Point of Departure, then we are stationed at Beauty, Goodness and Truth from where the undistorted Vision of Reality is revealed to us It is the man of many Points of Departure who is truly happy for he sees in the midst of immanence the wonders of Transcendence

THE PROBLEMS OF ORGANIZATION

Every form, however refined it may be, is a limitation to Life. Experience always feels restricted in the process of Expression. Life cannot unfold itself in all its glory in any form. It is because of this that Nature is never at rest, it is engaged in a ceaseless process of perfecting the forms of expression. Evolution would come to a stop if Nature were to feel satisfied with what it has created. This constant flux in the realm of forms is, as it were, the very nature of the created world. Nothing is at a standstill, everything is in motion. But this flux in Nature is not a repetitive movement; there is a quality of newness in everything that Nature creates. *Even on the same tree no two leaves are identical.* Everything has about it a stamp of uniqueness so that Nature seems to be giving its individual attention to everything that it creates. This is obviously because the Creator wants to convey *something* through His creation and since no form is good enough to convey the innermost secret of the Creator, He goes on changing the forms, refining them and making them more and more perfect.

Why is form a limitation to Life? This is because Life or Reality cannot be caught in any form, however subtle it may be. A form even on the highest plane of manifestation is unable to catch Life or Reality and hold it for others to see. That which is caught by the form is not the Life or Reality, but a negation of it. All that the form can do is to 'point the finger' towards that Reality which it has not been able to catch and hold. Thus every form is only a symbol suggesting the existence of Reality which transcends it. The Great Upanishadic statement 'Not for the sake of the wife is the wife dear, but for the sake of the SELF is the wife dear' refers clearly to the symbolical nature of all created things. Thus every form can become for us a point of departure from the world of immanence to that of transcendence. Things, persons, ideas belonging as they do to the manifested realm, are meant to serve as points of departure for us so that we see the beauty of transcendence revealed through them.

The one remarkable characteristic in the creative activities of Nature which one can perceive is that its forms are never rigid, but always flexible, capable of adapting themselves to the requirements of the situation. Nature holds its forms very lightly so that changes in form happen smoothly. Such adaptation would be impossible if the forms were rigid and

set. Nature wields its authority on the forms so lightly that it makes it easy for the indwelling Life to manipulate them for greater effectiveness in expression. It is because Nature holds the forms lightly that the latter become symbols or windows revealing the Beauty of the realm beyond

However, when we come to Man, the situation alters 'Help nature and work with her' is not the instruction which man has taken. Man desires to control nature and thus alter her ways. It is in this alteration that he creates numerous complications. It is true that he anticipates the working of Nature and thereby produces a form far more quickly than would be the case if left entirely to the natural process. But to the form thus created he adds something else which tends to shut out the Indwelling Life or make it difficult for that Life to express itself. Man tends to make his forms rigid and set so that they are not sensitive enough to respond to the impacts and the impulses of Life. Man puts too much of himself into the forms he creates thus preventing them from becoming symbols or windows through which one can look at the world Beyond. His forms are filled up leaving no openings so that new rays of Light from the transcendental world cannot come. It is this which makes his forms rigid.

Now a form that is rigid cannot adapt itself to new situations. It has to go on only with the

impulse which has been bottled up within its frame work. But since Life cannot be caught in a form that which serves as a Life impulse to such rigid forms is not Life at all but a distortion of it. In such forms we deal only with shadows and not with the Substance. A rigid form therefore cannot serve as a Point of Departure from immanence to transcendence. It has no quality of suggestiveness for it does not *point* to anything. Here the shadow pretends to be the Substance but a pretender cannot have the regal dignity and splendour of the King even though he may have dressed himself up in glittering clothes. There is no wonder that such forms deteriorate having been cut away from fresh impulses of Life. Even though these forms may be structurally very beautiful they contain only stagnant pools of water. We see degeneration in man made forms because of their dissociation with the very Source of Vitality.

Now an organisation is a form created by man—it may be a political or a social or an economic or an educational or a spiritual organization. For the functioning of an organization two things are needed: structure and impulse. All organizations start with an original impulse given to them by persons or by ideologies. They have their structural edifice through which the impulse expresses itself. When we say that persons or ideologies give

the original impulse what we mean is that they become channels or instruments conveying an impulse emanating from realms that transcend their frontiers. If a person or an ideology fails to become such a channel the result is the introduction of an idol worship in the organizations created by them. Thus a person or an idea becomes an idol which is worshipped by the members who constitute such organizations. An impulse emanating from the transcendental realm conveyed either by a person or an ideology is essential for an organization. Similarly, a suitable structural edifice is necessary to serve as an instrument of expression for such an impulse. Now if an organization is to function with only the impulse given to it once upon a time it is but obvious that it will soon become degenerated due to the staleness of its content. Since Life cannot be caught and bottled up the impulse which an organization has caught is not a Life impulse but a negation of it. If it goes by what it has caught, there must needs arise devitalization of that organization. In order that there may be a living touch with Reality or Truth or Life it is of the utmost importance that the organization should remain absolutely open to new impacts and therefore must have no identification with any person or idea or the opposite of that person or idea. Any identification with the so-called original or later impulse will mean the creation of a dogma.

An identification with the impulse, caught and maintained reduces that organization to mere propagandist work. A propagandist organization must catch and hold whatever impulse it is supposed to have received. It is obvious that in order to carry on propaganda it is necessary to have something that is tangible and well defined. In other words unless there is a crystallization of an impulse either in terms of thought or action there is no basis for propaganda. When an impulse becomes crystallized it becomes a creed or dogma for the organization or movement in which such a crystallization has happened. A crystallization is a continuity of an ideological or philosophical content—it is something which has been carried over. Now in order to carry over anything we must first hold it. An organization that carries over a content is thus holding what it considers to be an impulse and by the very act of holding an impulse it is depriving itself of a contact with Truth or Reality or Life. A continuity of content is therefore repugnant to the very vitality of an organization because by such continuity a living touch with Reality ceases to exist.

But can an organization exist without continuity? As noted above every organization has two constituents—Structure and Content or Impulse. The structure of an organization has undoubtedly to continue even though there may be modifications

introduced in it. An organization cannot exist without a continuity of structure. To be exact, a modified continuity is essential for every organization—that is what Nature does with reference to myriads of forms created by it. To discard a structure is to waste enormous energy as well as time. A need may arise when a structure or an organization has to be discarded but that can be only when it has become utterly rotten and useless for the purposes of expressing the Life impulse. In other words, when it has become so rigid that it refuses to allow any new ray of Light to enter its framework. Thus a rigidity of structure invariably results in continuity of content because of the barrier created against the entry of new impulses or Life waves. A modified continuity in structure with a never ceasing newness of the content—it is this which can keep an organization free from degeneration and devitalization.

Can an organization exist without a continuity of content? Is not content the very soul of an organization? If the soul ceases to continue with reference to an organization, will not the structural edifice of that organization fall to pieces? An organization must have a constant touch with its soul—in fact without such touch, it would become a soulless edifice. But a *constant contact* is fundamentally different from a *continuity of contact*. A continuity pre-supposes something that is carried

over from the past, in constant contact the touch is from moment to moment because each moment is a window through which the Vision of Reality or Truth of Life is made possible. Thus in order to save an organization from degeneration and devitalization what is needed is a constant touch with Reality, and this is possible only when the continuity of content ceases to exist.

Now the content of an organization is supplied by the individuals who comprise that organization. While the individuals have to work within the structure given to them they are absolutely free to pour whatever content they like into that structure. If the individuals maintain a continuity of content, it is but obvious that the organization that they serve will soon degenerate. If the structure of that organization is strong it may continue to exist but it will be a form, perhaps a beautiful form, with no soul in it. It is the 'pretender' who will preside over the activities of that organization having kept the King out due to the wall of continuity erected by the individual. We find many such organizations continuing to exist with numerous activities with tremendous show and pomp but with no Life in them. And the Life has been kept away not due to any structural defect but because of the individuals controlling those organizations having maintained a continuity of content—because of those individuals

having brought about a crystallization of Life-impulse. Creeds and dogmas are created in a very subtle manner and these are brought into existence by the individuals who refuse, consciously or unconsciously, to step out of the process of psychological or spiritual continuity. An individual feels secure in the process of continuity and so in seeking this psychological or spiritual security he brings about a devitalization of the organization which he professes to serve. The individual thus becomes a barrier against the entry of new rays and impulses into the organization to which he belongs. With an identification with a specific impulse he creates a wall which shuts out new Life impulses, and the identification arises invariably out of a desire for psychological or spiritual security. It is this problem which faces practically all our organizations. This problem has been summed up very beautifully in the following words:

"Live we must, in this world of five senses yet few know how to live. They cling to the thing and miss the symbol conveyed by it."

UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD

MANY A time it is stated that although The Theosophical Society is not committed to any belief, there is one belief to which every member is required to subscribe. Such a statement has obviously a contradiction in it for how can there be any belief in an organization which is committed to no belief? And yet we are told that a member must believe in Brotherhood as without such a belief he cannot join The Theosophical Society. Now a question arises: Is a member required to believe in Brotherhood? The first Object of The Theosophical Society indicates no such belief. The implication of the first Object is that we are related to each other; in other words, it means that relationship is a fact which cannot be denied. To live is to be related, not merely related to human beings but also to sub-human creatures, as also to those who have transcended the normal level of humanity. Life without relationship is impossible. It is not something which has to be believed in, but something which is to be recognized as a fact of existence.

All of us are related to each other, and even when we declare that we do not want to be related to others it constitutes a relationship. In brief, by virtue of our existence, we are related to each other. And so, whatever we may do, we cannot escape relationship.

Now since relationship is a fact of human existence, a question must naturally arise in the minds of all intelligent people and that is What can I do to establish right relationship with others? If one is related and cannot escape relationship, it is but sensible that one should establish right relationship. The first Object of The Theosophical Society indicates a move in this direction. Its purpose is to establish a nucleus of all those people who want to establish right relationship with all others. In other words, it aims at bringing together all those individuals who want to discover a *Way* to Right Relationship. It is therefore not a belief in Brotherhood which brings people together in The Theosophical Society—it is a recognition of the fact of relationship and a desire to establish right relationship which is the very foundation of the Theosophical Movement.

To seek out a *Way* to right relationship is therefore the aim and the purpose of The Theosophical Society. Men and women of different races, religions and nationalities come together in this

vast organization impelled by this urge to discover right relationship with all that lives. But does The Theosophical Society point to us a direction in which we may go if our desire is to establish right relationship? It is here that the second and the third Objects of The Theosophical Society help us. Sometimes the two Objects are regarded as subsidiary and therefore of not the same importance as the first Object. Nothing can be farther from truth. The second and the third Objects emanate from the first. In fact the first Object has no meaning save in terms of the second and the third Objects.

Now let us see what are the lines that they indicate for the establishment of right relationship. It is but obvious that we cannot be rightly related to other individuals unless we understand them. It is only as we understand people that we can be rightly related to them. What is indeed the way of understanding? To understand anybody or anything we must observe that individual or that object. Without observation understanding is not possible. Now what does observation mean? It means looking at the behaviour of men and things without any prejudice or bias. In other words, observation pre-supposes an attitude which is free from both condemnation and identification. We cannot observe that with which we are identified,

nor can we observe that which we have rejected or condemned. To look at the behaviour of men and things without condemnation or identification is therefore essential for observation. It is out of this observation that understanding can emerge. It means that the individual who wishes to establish right relationship with others must have an absolutely open mind with reference to the behaviour of other individuals or groups of individuals. Now this is exactly what is indicated in the second Object of The Theosophical Society. We are required to make a study of Comparative Religion, Science and Philosophy. Now science, religion and philosophy are the three fields in which man's behaviour can be observed, for they deal with his three activities in relation to Nature, Reality and Man. Man's entire behaviour is, as it were, contained in these three fields. And so, in order to observe man, it is necessary to study his behaviour in these three fields of life. Now study is not necessarily always through books. One can observe life through numerous ways not excluding the way indicated by the study of books. In accordance with man's inclination he must carry on his studies—which means observe life's behaviour. But we cannot study rightly unless we are free from the process of condemnation as well as identification. To organize individual or collective studies with con-

demnation or identification is not to study at all—it is to indulge in propaganda. Now The Theosophical Society is not a propagandist organization, and this is because it encourages a study without any condemnation or identification. In other words, the second Object indicates to us that in order to understand, we must observe, and observation can be 'only of the behaviour of life. How man behaves in religion, in science and in philosophy, how he behaves individually as well as collectively—this is the subject of study and observation in terms of the second Object of The Theosophical Society. One who wishes to establish right relationship cannot afford to condemn anything or anybody, nor can he identify with anything or anybody.

But it is our common experience that when other people judge us from our behaviour, our words and actions, they do not judge us aright. There is something in each one of us which transcends even our best behaviour. No doubt in order to understand anybody we have first to observe his behaviour, but such observation is bound to reveal to us that there is something in each individual which transcends his behaviour, something which is beyond what he manifests. Our judgment of an individual from his outer behaviour is bound to be defective. And so in order to understand a man it is necessary for us to contact that which transcends his behaviour,

transcends all that he has manifested in the fields of religion, science and philosophy. People have their distinctive approaches to Reality, Nature and Man, and all these approaches indicate to us their behaviour. But there is *That* in man which does not enter into manifestation, which defies all manifestation but which is, as it were, the soul of all manifestation. Now it is certain that we cannot understand unless we have contact with this element which remains Unmanifest, for it is the *Ground* of man's behaviour, the soul of his manifested self. It is this contact with the Unmanifest which is indicated to us in the third Object of The Theosophical Society. If study of outer behaviour were enough for right relationship there would have been no need to state the third Object of The Theosophical Society. The third Object speaks of the unexplained phenomena of nature, something mysterious. This unexplained phenomena is not what is revealed by Occultism, for Occultism too deals only with the behaviour of men and things on planes other than the physical. But there is something mysterious and latent in all manifestations and it is to this that our attention is directed by the third Object. We cannot truly understand anything unless we are able to commune with this mysterious and latent—in other words, the unmanifest or transcendental. Thus, for the establishment of right

relationship it is necessary for us to contact both the manifest and the unmanifest in man. This is true understanding, the foundation of Right Relationship.

In The Theosophical Society while we have carried on work in terms of the second Object, we have yet to understand the full significance of the third Object and bring it into the process of understanding. Our researches in religion and science—both physical and occult—have been most remarkable, although we have not sufficiently developed as individuals the Theosophical attitude of observing life without condemnation or identification. It may, however, be said that we are working in this field. But the third Object with its indication of a communion with the mysterious and the latent is still a new and an unknown field for us. In the years to come there is no doubt that The Theosophical Society will move in this direction too. The time has come for us to emphasize this aspect, for without understanding the latent and the mysterious, the behaviour of the manifested world becomes meaningless. *It is the Unmanifest that gives meaning to the manifest.* It is through the observation of the manifest and the communion with the Unmanifest that true understanding is born—and it is this which is the fundamental basis of Right Relationship.

WHAT IS TRANSCENDENCE ?

IN THE Philosophies of the East as well as of the West we are familiar with the terms : Transcendence and Immanence. Immanence is obviously the Universe or Nature, not merely in its physical manifestation but in all its aspects, physical as well as the super physical. Immanence, in other words, covers all planes of manifestation. Immanence is the field of investigation both for the scientist as well as the Occultist. They study the behaviour of Life as it manifests in plane after plane. Thus is science able to give us a detailed description of Life as it behaves on the physical plane. Similarly the Occultist is able to give us a detailed description of the behaviour of Life on the super physical plane. The Laws of Karma, Re incarnation, Evolution of Life, Form and Consciousness, the Growth and Development of Races and Sub races, the Chains and Rounds of the Solar System, the Inner Government of the World and the Path of Initiation—all these are detailed descriptions of Life as it functions on different planes of existence. Thus the subject matter both of science and occultism is the Im-

manence of Life or Life's manifestation in the Universe. It is a vast field of study revealing great wonders of Life's behaviour in plane after plane of the Solar System. It is an inexhaustible subject with regard to which it has been stated that although 'veil after veil be lifted, there will be veil after veil behind.' To investigate into the nature of Immanence is to remove veil after veil and thus study subtler and subtler aspects of Life's manifestation. And yet when even the supposedly last veil is lifted there will still be veil after veil representing Immanence in finer and finer forms. Thus the process of removing veil after veil is to observe subtler and subtler forms of Immanence. The existence of veils implies the object which is veiled and the subject from which it is veiled. Thus Immanence is the field in which the subject and the object play hide and seek with each other.

What then is Transcendence? Is it Immanence raised to its subtlest form? Is it the object that is veiled or is it the subject that sees through the veil? If Transcendence be equated with Reality, what is Reality? One thing is obvious and that is: Transcendence cannot be Immanence. Transcendence is therefore that which transcends Immanence. Now we have seen that Immanence is the Manifested Universe not merely at the physical level but at all levels of existence. And so Transcendence is not

of the realm of Manifestation—no matter at what level that Manifestation be

Now Manifestation can broadly be divided into two aspects—the Visible and the Invisible. There are certain aspects of Manifestation which are invisible to us. Theosophy postulates the existence of planes and sub planes of the Solar System. The Visible and the Invisible are not two universes—they are two aspects of the same universe—this means that certain planes and sub planes of the Solar System are outside our present powers of perception, all the same they exist and are a part of the Manifested Universe. As Evolution proceeds the line between the Visible and the Invisible is being pushed back so that the realm of the Visible becomes larger and larger. Be it noted here that the Invisible is a part of Immanence since it belongs to the realm of manifestation.

We are told that as a result of evolution man develops faculties appropriate to the various planes of existence. These faculties enable him to function on these planes and sub-planes. As we study man and his faculties today, we find that he has not developed faculties for functioning on all the planes. Thus there are certain faculties which are objective and there are certain others which are subjective. The objective faculties are the instruments with which man functions on certain planes, subjective

faculties are those which belong to those planes where man is still not able to function. Thus Immanence can not only be broadly divided into the Visible and the Invisible in terms of planes but also into the Subjective and Objective in terms of faculties. Now just as the Invisible is a part of the Manifested Universe similarly the Subjective too is a part of the same Manifested Universe. The Invisible and the Subjective therefore do not tell us of Transcendence but only of the subtler aspects of Immanence.

There is a common belief that Reality or Transcendence can be contacted only by those whose Intuitive faculties are developed and since most of us do not have these faculties developed—they being subjective to us—we must wait for the present and engage ourselves in the task of cultivating intuitive faculties. To say that Reality or Transcendence can be contacted only on the Intuitive plane is to give to Reality a location, in other words to impart to it a quality of space. To state that Reality can be contacted only after certain intuitive faculties are developed is to impose upon Reality the quality of Time. Thus do we bring Transcendence into the framework of Space and Time. Now that which is in Space and Time is manifestation and is therefore Immanence. The Intuitive plane is a part of manifestation although it may be invisible to us,

the faculty of intuition pertaining to that plane is subjective to us. This faculty when developed will enable us to perceive subtler aspects of Immanence—finer forms of manifestation. It will enable us to respond to different sets of vibrations emanating from the object. Reality or Transcendence should not be confused with the Invisible and the Subjective. It should be remembered that a capacity to function on the Nirvanic plane is still a capacity in Immanence—it is a capacity to respond to very subtle vibrations emanating from the Object. And so, on all planes and sub planes of the Solar System, we are dealing with the manifestation of Reality and not with Reality Itself.

What then is Transcendence or Reality and where is it to be contacted? Transcendence is the Unmanifest. The Manifest and the Unmanifest are different but not opposed to each other. The Unmanifest is the Ground in which the Manifest exists. The Unmanifest is the Point while the Manifest is the Circle. The Point and the Circle, although different, are not opposed to each other.⁴ In fact the Circle has no existence without the Point, and the Point contains within it the possibility of innumerable Circles. There is no level of manifestation where the Unmanifest does not exist. In fact Transcendence touches every point of Immanence, for how can the Manifest exist without the Unmanifest?

The Unmanifest or the Transcendence is the *Sat* or *Existence* of the Indian Philosophy even as Immanence is the Bliss or *Ananda*. The Immanence is the Circle of Creation as Transcendence is the Point of Existence. The Circle of Creation represents the Joy, the Bliss the Play, the *Leela* of the Point of Existence. It is difficult for us to regard the Universe as Bliss but this is because we look at it only from the circumference. When we look at the Universe from the Point of Transcendence, it is then and then alone that we have a new perspective. This new perspective enables us to look at manifestation with its myriads of forms as a Play and so every aspect of that manifestation becomes a Joy to us.

But how is this Point of Transcendence to be contacted? It is by understanding the middle term in *Sat*, *Chit* and *Ananda*—Existence, Consciousness and Bliss—that we shall know how to contact this Point. In philosophical language we are familiar with Reality, Man and Nature. Man is the middle term between Reality and Nature. If Reality is the Point of Existence and the Nature the Circle of Creation, Man is assuredly the Line of Relationship between the two. *Chit* or Consciousness is the meeting place of the Point and the Circle—it is where the Point emerges as the Circle and where the Circle disappears into the Point. The Consciousness is the medium

through which the Point expresses itself into a Circle and the Circle slips into the Point. As is the purity of the medium so will be the reflection of Transcendence in Immanence. Immanence can but reflect the Transcendence and even though there be millions upon millions of reflections, Transcendence remains as it is. Just as from the same Point innumerable Circles may be drawn and yet the Point remains, in the same way Reality remains even though IT may be reflected in countless ways in manifestation. If *Sat* or Existence be described as Experience and *Ananda* or Bliss as Expression then *Chit* or Consciousness may be regarded as the Medium through which Experience passes into Expression. If the medium be pure the reflection will be clear, otherwise it will be distorted. Thus Man is the medium through which Reality sends out its rays of manifestation—here Man is to be understood as Self, the Unit of Life. In Theosophical terminology this Unit of Life may be the individual Soul or it may be the Group Soul. It is this Unit of Life which serves as the Medium and so the reflection of Reality in Immanence depends upon the purity or otherwise of this medium. This idea of the purity of the medium has been beautifully expressed by N. Sri Ram in his book *An Approach to Reality* thus :

“The mind is purged of its impurities, and instead of being opaque as before, it becomes

a pure crystalline lens "

N. Sri Ram further in the same book describes this state as that of 'immaculate sensitive passivity' This is what is meant by the purity of the medium—*Chit* or consciousness serving as a pure crystalline lens through which the ray of Transcendence passes on into Immanence Thus Transcendence is the Being, Immanence the Becoming and the relationship between the two is represented by the Consciousness of Man or the Unit of Life. Man or the Unit of Life is the medium through which the ray of Reality passes into the realm of Nature However, when this medium is opaque, the reflection of Reality becomes distorted. It is as Man's consciousness shows forth 'immaculate sensitive passivity' that he contacts the Point of Transcendence and by this very contact is able to bring down the ray of Reality into the world of Immanence.

Just as there is a Medium of expression provided by Consciousness, similarly there is a mode of expression which depends upon the faculty which the individual unit of Life possesses When the ray of Reality passes through the medium of Consciousness and emerges into the world of Immanence it has then to be conveyed in order that it may shed its Light upon the darkened world For this each individual unit of life must supply the necessary mode of expression or channel of communication Now this

will assuredly depend upon the faculties which that unit of life has developed. If man's faculties appertain only to the physical plane, it is but natural that the mode of expression will be limited to that plane. But if man has faculties of various planes he will be able to supply a variety of channels for the communication of the Light of Reality. If man possesses intuitive faculties his communication will be richer than one who does not possess those faculties. And so, as is the stage of evolution, so will be the mode of expression.

The Point of Transcendence can be contacted at every level of Immanence, for Transcendence or Reality is not nearer one plane than the other. Since Reality is the Unmanifest it can be contacted at every point of Manifestation—for the Manifestation 'lives, moves and has its being in the Unmanifest. And so in order to contact the Unmanifest one has not to travel to any particular plane of Manifestation. From where we stand we can contact the Point of Transcendence provided our consciousness can have a state of immaculate sensitive passivity. In other words, wherever we are we can, with an utterly negative approach contact Reality. But it is when we come to the question of conveying the meaning of Reality that we need modes of expression—and these will depend upon our faculties, those capacities by which we are able to function on different planes.

and sub-planes of manifestation.

Thus Transcendence is Being, Existence or the Point of Reality; Immanence is Becoming, Bliss or the Circle of Creation and Consciousness is the relationship between the two. In the age-old triplicity of Reality, Man and Nature, it is Man that is the connecting link between Transcendence and Immanence.

THE INTEGRATION OF MAN

IT IS said that the proper study of mankind is man, for as is the man, so will be the mankind. In a given society, as are the individuals so will be the institutions—social, political, economic or educational. While the institutions are the forms of society, the individual is the very life, for he pours into the social organization the content which he has derived from his own experience.

In the course of the last hundred years three powerful forces have contributed to the moulding of man's thoughts and actions. These forces are represented by Physical Science, by the Social Philosophy of Communism and by Modern Psychology. All these have shattered to a large extent the dignity of man and have brought a sense of utter insignificance to the human individual. Physical science regards man as a creature of the blind forces of nature, in the vast universe he seems to be a mere accident having no future. Communism regards man as a creature of economic conditions, he has no individual existence apart from the class to which he belongs. Psychology considers man as a creature of the Unconscious urges—the unconscious

powerfully influencing the conscious, thus subjecting man to its whims and fancies. Science has created the modern technological civilization resulting in a vast and complex social organization. In this organization man is completely lost. Alexis Carrel writing in *Man the Unknown* rightly says

"Human beings are not found anywhere in nature. There are only individuals. The individual differs from the human being because he is a concrete event. He is the one who acts, loves, suffers, fights and dies. The human being is an abstraction studied by physiologists, psychologists and sociologists. Modern society ignores the individual. It only takes account of human beings. The confusion of the concepts of the individual and of the human beings has led the industrial civilization to a fundamental error—the standardization of man."

The standardization of man obviously leads to the utter suppression of the human individual, and the suppressed individual naturally lives under a great psychological tension. Life today is lived for most people at a great mental and emotional pressure. The result of this has been nervous breakdowns, frantic efforts to seek release from tension, emotional frustrations, mental disorders, anti-social tendencies and a general psychological tiredness. It is these factors that have contributed to the diffused and superficial living which is the

characteristic of our age. We have no deep contacts with life—nothing really moves us deeply. Ours is a life lived mostly within the framework of mental, emotional and physical habits. And the life of habits is *par excellence* a mechanical life. Such a life is dull, boring and most uninteresting. In short it is a life of Distractions. Aldous Huxley very truly says

“ . . . never before today has an attempt been made to organize and exploit distractions, to make of them, because of their economic importance, the core and vital centre of human life—to idealize them as the highest manifestations of mental activity. Ours is an age of systematized irrelevancies and the imbecile within us has become one of the Titans upon whose shoulders rests the weight of the social and economic systems. Recollectedness or the overcoming of distractions has never been more necessary than now, it has also never been so difficult.”

If our life is full of distractions, the question arises, from what are we distracted? Distraction can be only in relation to something which is considered fundamental or essential. It is no exaggeration to say that we are today distracted from Life itself. A distraction presupposes an end, a purpose from which we are supposed to be moving away. What then is the end of life? Obviously

live fully and completely must be the end of life—fullness of life must be the purpose of living herefore, that which prevents us from living *fully* is a distraction. In religious terminology this is known as weakness, for what is a weakness but a distraction from that which we desire to become?

In our age there are innumerable distractions which prevent us from living fully and completely. Now a distraction implies the absence of a unifying factor—the factor which can hold different parts of our being together. This lack of a Unitive principle is to be seen both at the individual as well as the social level. We are trying to hold society together by artificial stimulants as otherwise it is likely to disintegrate. These stimulants are wars, aggressive nationalisms, class hatreds and sensationalism of various types. Society is able to feel united more under the stress of war than during the periods of peace. What happens at the social level is to be found in the life of the human individual also. For the individual is trying to hold the different parts of his being together through similar artificial stimulants like sensationalism produced by cinema, by ever-changing fashions by amusements, as also through drugs and narcotics. It is through these and other stimulants that the individual man and the present day society are trying to maintain some sort of unity in the midst

of ever increasing disruption. Thus the seeming unity has been artificially created which disrupts itself at the slightest provocation. Alan Watts, in a very remarkable book, entitled *The Supreme Identity*, says

'Our present civilization quite obviously lacks any unifying principle. The degree of unity which the vague term modern civilization implies is in many ways a unity of disunity, the people involved being given a superficial coherence by the spread of technology and by common acceptance of certain ways of thought whose very nature is to create further disintegration.'

It is this absence of a unifying principle which prevents us from living fully and completely. It means we are not able to give our undivided attention to that which is before us—our mental, emotional and physical environment. While we are engaged in some work—in dealing with the problems of life—our minds and emotions are distracted elsewhere. The following illustration given by Dr Suzuki in his book *Living by Zen* is very apt for understanding this problem of distraction.

'The Pupil (to the Master) How do you discipline yourself in daily life ?

'The Master When I am hungry, I eat when I feel tired I sleep

"The Pupil That is what everybody does
Could they be said to be disciplining themselves as
much as yourself ?

"The Master No, not in the same way

"The Pupil Why not the same ?

The Master When they eat, they dare not eat
their minds are filled with all kinds of contrivances
Therefore, I say, not the same."

It means that engaged in various avocations
physical or mental, we are being pulled in different
directions. Distraction is therefore a Pull. We
experience pulls in our life all the time with the
result that we cannot deal with life in a manner
whereby we can give our undivided attention to it.
Our attention is diffused and so our contact with
life is very superficial. The question here arises
why is there a Pull in our lives ? And what is it
that pulls us ? That which pulls us is the incomplete
experiences of our life. When an experience is
incompletely felt it exercises a pull, and the
experiences remain incomplete because we cannot
give our full undivided attention to them. It is
these incomplete experiences that build up a storehouse
of pulls. And it is this which all the time conditions
us due to which we never *act* but always *react*. We
meet life's experience always with a reaction which
is the result of a pull exercised by the incomplete
experiences of the past. Our reactions are funda

mentally of a two-fold nature—reactions of Longing or of Fear. We face the experience of life either with a feeling of expectation, anticipation or with a feeling of fear or repulsion. And so we never meet an experience afresh but always under the conditioning influence of these reactions.

Now all our experiences have two components—the *Fact* of the experience and the *Feeling* derived out of that experience. All our experiences leave traces in our mind and these we call Memory. Thus there is the Memory of Facts and the Memory of Feelings. Without a memory of facts our individual and social life would become impossible. Besides, the memory of facts does not exercise any pull in our lives. It is the memory of feelings which all the time pulls us—and this is created by the incomplete experiences of our life. Into the facts of life we naturally put feelings and when these feelings are incompletely experienced they create a memory—the memory of feelings. It is this which distracts us while we are in the midst of a new experience. Thus man experiences disunity within himself. A life constantly distracted by the memory of feelings is obviously a disintegrated life. And so the integration of man is indeed a very vital problem of the day.

Now what is integration? It is not a mere intellectual synthesis—it is the Wholeness of being. Man must regain his wholeness if he is to be happy.

This means there must be in his life a unifying principle in the presence of which life would be free from distractions. Just as in the presence of a magnet the iron filings group themselves into a pattern, in the same way in the presence of a Unitive Principle man would be free from distractions thus regaining his wholeness. An integrated life is a life without distractions, without pulls in different directions—it is a *whole* life. It is our common experience that in the presence of something overwhelming or in the presence of something exquisitely beautiful we are for the time being free from distractions. In the presence of death with reference to some near or dear one we are so stunned that nothing distracts us, or when we are in the presence of something extraordinarily beautiful we do not like to be disturbed. In those moments our attention is not divided. If, therefore, we could be always in the presence of the Beautiful, perchance it would be possible for us to be free from distractions and to lead a life of fullness or completeness. If life could reveal to us newer and newer wonders all the time we would not experience any pull or distraction—we would be able to give our full and undivided attention to things presented to us. Is this possible?

But before we can answer that question let us understand the nature of our psychological state in the presence of something exquisitely beautiful

C Jinarījadīsa has very clearly described this state in one of his essays in *The Mediator*: He says that in the presence of something beautiful, "the mind is held still; and the thinking faculty is tense and yet not thinking".

The thinking faculty tense and yet not thinking—that is the state in which we know freedom from distractions. Thus it is not in the realm of conscious thinking, however profound it may be, that we can know freedom from distraction. It is not through conscious thought that we can perceive the wonders of life—for this the "thinking faculty has to be tense and yet not thinking"! The perception of Wonder or Beauty is something beyond the mind. It is as we contact the Superconscious that we perceive the Wonder and the Beauty of life. This Superconscious may be described by many names—it may be called God, Master, Infinite, Beauty, Truth, or it may be called not the Theosophy of books, but the Theosophy of Being—not the Theosophy which is immanent but that which is Transcendent.

The question is, can this Infinite be contacted by us in our daily life? Can the wonders of life be revealed to us in the midst of our daily occupations? Now if God or Infinite is omnipresent, it should be possible for us to contact IT anywhere. The Infinite has its centre everywhere and its

circumference nowhere The Eternal is not apart from the Moment—each Moment is the centre where the Eternal exists In other words each moment of our life can become a window through which the Eternal the Infinite, the Truth, the Master can be perceived—provided the thinking faculty is tense and yet not thinking

Thus all facts of life can become windows through which we can look at the Eternal the Infinite the True and the Beautiful But a window must only be outlined with bricks—not filled with bricks for then it would cease to function as a window Unfortunately into the facts of life we put the memories of feelings and thus fill up the window Thus it is that the facts of life do not serve as windows through which we can look at the Eternal and the Infinite In order to perceive the Infinite we must discard, remove the bricks which we have placed in the window It is by this process of discarding that we shall be able to make an opening through which to look at the wonders of life This is indeed the process of Discrimination or Self criticism. And it is as a result of this process that our thinking faculty will become tense The purpose of Discrimination or Repudiation, is to make our minds extraordinarily aware It is essential that the process of discrimination, of repudiation must go on ceaselessly This is the sleepless vigilance of the neophyte

But in the midst of this tenseness of the thinking faculty there must arise the cessation of thought; in the midst of constant repudiation there must emerge perfect repose. For without repose, looking through the window is in vain. How to bring this about? Having carved a window out of the everyday facts of life, by a process of constant repudiation, we must *observe*, for in this very observation through the window, our thinking faculty will arrive at the cessation of thought even though it will maintain its tenseness. There is no effort needed to arrive at cessation of thought, for by the process of constant repudiation we shall be face to face with something Beautiful which will arrest our attention. Needless to say that if after carving a window we refuse to observe, to look through that opening, we shall not see the wonders of life. There are many who repudiate but regard repudiation as the very end and thus close their eyes before the wonders that lie revealed. There are still others who try to look through the bricked wall without making an opening. It is essential that an opening is first made into the wall by a process of repudiation. Having done this we have only to look through that opening to come to the cessation of thought. We shall then see *that* which will hold our attention; we shall know what freedom from distraction is. This is what J. Krishnamurti describes as Choiceless Awareness.

To observe life in the midst of ceaseless repudiation is to contact Beauty, God, Truth, the Infinite, the Eternal. Thus to be utterly resigned in the midst of constant repudiation, to be perfectly reposed in the midst of tension is to live in the presence of THAT which integrates our life even as the magnet does to the iron filings. It is this instruction that is given to us in *Light on the Path* where it is stated: "Though thou fightest, be not thou the Warrior." This is indeed repose in the midst of tension. It is this very idea which has been expressed in the following words of Jacob Boehme.

"The scholar said to his Master: How may I come to the super-sensual life, that I may see God and hear Him speak?

"His Master said: When thou canst throw thyself for a moment into that where no creature dwelleth, then thou hearest what God speaketh.

"The scholar said: Is that near at hand or far off?

"The Master said: It is in thee if thou canst for a while cease from all thinking and willing, thou shalt hear the unspeakable words of God.

"The scholar said: How can I hear when I stand still from thinking and willing?

"The Master said: When thou standest still from the thinking and willing of self, then the eternal hearing seeing and speaking will be revealed in thee."

THE GREAT DUAL PRINCIPLES

IN A letter addressed in 1881 to Mr. A. P. Sinnet, a former Vice President of the Theosophical Society, the great Adept who is known in modern Theosophical literature as the Mahāchohan wrote as follows :

“To be true, religion and philosophy must offer the solution of every problem. That the world is in such a bad condition morally is a conclusive evidence that none of its religions and philosophies, those of the *civilised* races less than any other, have ever possessed the *truth*. The right and logical explanations on the subject of the problems of the great dual principles—right and wrong, good and evil, liberty and despotism, pain and pleasure, egotism and altruism—are as impossible to them now as they were 1881 years ago. They are as far from the solution as they ever were, but to these there must be somewhere a consistent solution, and if our doctrines prove their competence to offer it, then the world must be quick to confess *that* must be the true philosophy, the true religion, the true light, which gives *truth* and nothing but the truth ”

In the above statement, the Mahāchohan has detailed the great dual principles under five groups. These groups deal with man's individual and collective life at different levels or in different departments of human existence. These departments are religious, political, social, psychological and spiritual. Good and Evil are the main concerns of religion and religious morality, Liberty and Despotism deal with the politico-economic problems of man. Egotism and Altruism are matters of *motif* guiding social movements and organizations, Pain and Pleasure are assuredly psychological in their nature, and Right and Wrong are essentially questions of man's spiritual life.

These dual principles are fundamentally questions of value. Now physical science is not concerned with values—not with qualitative but with quantitative aspects of life. As there cannot be any quantitative measurement of values, physical science is not in a position to render any assistance in solving the problems that arise from the great dual principles. The Mahachohan says that the religions and the philosophies of the world have failed to give a consistent solution to these problems. Can Theosophy offer any solution? Can it help us to discover that factor of life which will enable us to resolve the problems of the great dual principles?

What is really meant by the problems of the

great dual principles? In our everyday life, we are constantly required to make choices and such choices are always between the dual principles. We are faced all the time with the pairs of opposites; in other words, we have a number of alternatives before us with reference to a given situation and the task of choosing between them is none too easy—in fact it is often extremely difficult. If we make a wrong choice we accumulate "evil karma" which has later on to be wiped off through much sorrow and suffering. Faced with the intricate problems of life, our constant endeavor is to arrive at right choices with reference to the situation encountered by us in the midst of our daily circumstances.

The great dual principles are indeed relative to the individual. Right and wrong, good and evil, pain and pleasure have meaning only with reference to the individual. Similarly, freedom and despotism are relative for what is regarded as freedom in one age may be considered as despotism in another. Concepts of freedom change just as ideas of social morality undergo transformations. Egotism and altruism, too, are matters of relativity. It is stated in *Light on the Path* that one may, by enlarging the limits of experience and desire, transfer one's interest to things which concern one's larger span of life. Normally we regard a person working for worldly possessions as egoistic, while one who works for

ideals as altruistic, but ideals may belong to one's larger span of life and thus constitute a subtle form of egotism. After all, egotism and altruism depend upon motives, and motives are assuredly relative to the individuals. Thus, the *words* used by different individuals for the dual principles may be the same but their *content* differs from individual to individual. If these dual principles are relative in their content, where can we go for absolute standards so that our choice may be right?

In a letter to Mr. Sinnet, the Master K H. says—

“Evil has no existence *per se* and is but the absence of good and exists but for him who is made its victim . . . Nature is destitute of goodness or malice, she follows only immutable laws when she either gives life and joy or sends suffering and death, and destroys what she has created. Nature has an antidote for every poison and her laws a reward for every suffering . . . The real evil proceeds from human intelligence and its origin rests entirely with the reasoning man who dissociated himself from Nature.”

Now, the question is, if evil has no existence *per se*, from where do the pairs of opposites arise? If Nature is destitute of goodness or malice, it is evident that the dual principles have no objective existence, they are obviously matters of subjective experience. There cannot be absolute standards

with which to measure things which have no objective existence. A subjective experience is individual and, therefore, cannot be generalized. Words are assuredly generalizations—but their content is individual, and in dealing with the dual principles we are not so much concerned with the words as with their content. An absolute standard implies a fixed point and such a fixed point has naturally to be objective, i.e. apart from the subject which is sought to be measured. If we seek absolute standards for dual principles, we have immediately to postulate an objective existence for them. This means giving to Nature attributes of good and evil. According to this concept we shall have to imagine Nature as distributing pain and pleasure as per its whims. This must mean dethronement of Law and Justice in Nature making us victims of its vagaries.

If Nature is destitute of goodness or malice, it can be conceived of only as Pure Energy or Force. The attributes of good and evil have been projected by the human individual on Nature which is pure and immaculate. As Master K. H. says, the origin of evil "rests entirely with the reasoning man who dissociates himself from Nature. Thus, it is man's dissociation from Nature that has produced problems of the dual principles. And it is the reasoning capacity of man which seems to be introducing this element of dissociation from Nature. In other

words, it is the mind of man which interferes with the process of Nature and thereby creates the problems of the dual principles. If only man would co-operate with Nature these problems would be resolved, nay, they would not arise at all.

"Help nature and work on with her" is the instruction given in *The Voice of the Silence*. Probably it is here that we may discover a "consistent solution" to the "problems of the great dual principles". To dissociate from Nature is to refrain from co-operating with it. In other words, it indicates the establishment of oneself as an agent separate from Nature. This may imply that man has his own plans separate from Nature's and obviously running counter to it as otherwise there would be close association between the two. Man's dissociation thus results in conflict with Nature. Due to his own plans he interferes with the processes of Nature. This conflict is indeed the conflict between the cosmic and the individual wills. Man is all the time trying to subdue the will of Nature to purposes of his own design. The flow of Nature's current is constantly being interfered with by man through the operations of his mind. He thus creates a duality of two wills and out of this duality arise all the great dual principles about which the Mahachohan speaks.

But, if man through his reasoning faculty is

supposed to be interfering with Nature, has he to suppress this faculty with all its power of imagination and ideation? Do ideals have no place in man's life? Has man to give up his individual will and submit himself to the demands of the cosmic will? If so where is the freedom of the human individual? How can man help Nature and work on with her?

It is but obvious that in order to help Nature, one must first understand its trend, its way, and, in order to understand Nature one must observe it. Now, there cannot be observation of anything if we interfere with its position or movement. If we try to introduce any modification in the thing which we propose to observe, it is evident that we cannot observe it. Thus, all projectional activities of the mind, all its chatterings, must cease if we wish to understand the will of Nature. In other words all modifying processes of the mind must come to a stop. And yet, if the mind is asleep, the process of observation has no meaning. A mind which is awake and yet not modifying—it is this which is needed if Nature's ways are to be understood. If the mind is not awake we shall not understand what we observe, and if the mind modifies we shall not be able to observe what we wish to understand! Thus observation with a watchful mind is essential in order to understand the processes of Nature. This indeed is the way to

commune with Nature. The forces—mental, emotional and physical—which all the time push us are indeed the will of Nature. We must commune with it if we would understand its ways. Now communion is not possible where there is resistance, interference or modification, and dissociation is a form of resistance—a non co-operation with Nature. Therefore, we are not able to understand the ways of Nature. We have, therefore, to see how the modifying processes of the mind can cease so that association with Nature may become possible.

It is obvious that the mind modifies what is presented to it by means of its thinking processes. Thus the process of modification is linked up with the operations of thought. In a given situation or a problem, the mind can think only if there are alternatives before it. When no alternative exists, the mind has no material to think about. The alternatives before the mind in all situations are of a twofold nature: (a) alternatives which have been tried and have been found wanting and (b) alternatives which have not been tried and which, therefore, constitute the *unknown* field. Now, the mind need not carry the unnecessary load of alternatives that have been tried and have proved fruitless. It is in the putting away of these alternatives that the mind becomes sharp and alert. This indeed is the extensive awareness of the mind. In a given situa-

tion, when the mind has put away tried and fruitless alternatives, it is obviously faced with an unknown field—the alternative that has not been tried and, therefore, is the unknown. Now, it is quite plain that the mind can think only about the known, with reference to the unknown it has no material. And, so, faced with the unknown the thinking process of the mind must come to a stop. Since there is no material to think about, the operations of thought must naturally cease. Thus the mind in a state of extensive awareness where all tried alternatives have been put aside is quiet and, therefore, free from all modifying processes. It is such a mind alone that can observe. It is watchful and yet quiet—extensively aware and yet free from modifying tendencies. It is in this state that communion with Nature is possible and one can come to this state with reference to any problem or any situation that one encounters in one's daily life.

Anything that arises in this quiet and silent mind—the mind in which all mentation has come to a stop—will naturally be an approximation of the will of Nature. As such, a mind does not modify or interfere with the current of Nature, but Nature is able to cast its pure and unsullied reflection in that mind. The will of Nature is indeed the Plan of the Logos, or the Archetype or the Great Ideas, or what you will. The archetype is the "far-off divine event

to which the "whole creation moves" If only we could see the archetypes, our life here on earth would be transformed, we would have no problem of the dual principles as our choice would always be right—in the direction of the archetype Obviously, we cannot see the archetype as the cosmic mental plane, which according to Theosophy is its habitat is far from our contacts But an approximation of the archetype would be enough as it would show us the *direction* in which to go Now, we do not arrive at this approximation because the mind constantly modifies the current of Nature The mind may think as much as it likes but it cannot come to this approximation because of the operation of two wills Approximation cannot be brought about—it *comes* when the process of mentation ceases with reference to any problem or situation It is approximation that alone can give us the right direction with regard to our relationship with things, persons and ideas It is in this approximation that our struggle with regard to choices will come to an end for we shall know immediately which path to take, the path along which Nature is tending to move The pairs of opposites will then become mere polarities with no conflict between them

¹ In *At the Feet of the Master* it is stated

¹ "When once a man has seen that [Plan] and really knows it, he cannot help working for it and

making himself one with it, because it is so glorious, so beautiful."

It is only in a state of communion that one really *sees* and *knows*. It is futile to speak about co operation with the will or the plan of Nature unless one has an approximation of the plan, a clear reflection of Nature's will. Without such an approximation we are sure to miss the direction along which Nature tends to operate. We have seen that whatever arises in the silence of the mind is an approximation of Nature's will. Thus the silent mind is an essential pre requisite to co operating with Nature.

But, a mere approximation would render a man utterly passive. In the sub human kingdoms we see an approximation¹ to the archetypal form because of which we are thrilled and fascinated by Nature's beauties. But the units of sub human life cannot speed up the process of Nature. They have no self conscious will and so are content to move as directed by the pace of Nature. But man is not content to play that role. He has a self-conscious will which does not allow him to play a passive part with reference to his life's movements. Now, this self-conscious will of man comes into conflict with Nature so long as it fails to see the archetypal trend. But, when the silent mind receives a clear reflection of Nature's plan through approximation, then there

begins for man a new chapter of co-operation with the Cosmic Will. Thus, having known the approximation, man is not required to play a passive role. In fact it is only in approximation that man's true initiative begins. What is this initiative of man and how does he co-operate with Nature?

It is by anticipating Nature. Co-operation is possible only when one can anticipate what is to come. This anticipation can come into being through imagination, not the lower imagination, but the purified imagination which has its starting point in facts and not in fantasies. Now, an imagination without approximation is a mere fantasy. When a man imagines on the basis of approximation, then alone is his imagination rooted in fact. Approximation is the starting point, the direction, which it is possible to know only when the mind is utterly silent, the mind which is free from all movement of thought. With this starting point imagination naturally anticipate or initiate further steps on road indicated by approximation. Imagination precedes approximation cannot anticipate rightly its starting point is incorrect. Thus, the true view of imagination lies in terms of right anticipation based on approximation.

Now, when there is right anticipation, man can direct his movement towards the anticipated point. This self-directed movement may be quick or slow.

according to man's capacities according to the vehicles that he possesses. But the problem of speed becomes comparatively simple when once the right direction is perceived. One can increase one's speed so as to reach the anticipated point more quickly. This speed will not run counter to Nature because its direction will be in terms of approximation.

The quickening of this movement the intensification of speed is indeed the process of acceleration. Now, all processes of Yoga fundamentally deal with acceleration. Dr Besant says 'Yoga is evolution crushed in the palm of the hand'. But acceleration without direction or approximation is meaningless, nay harmful. And so all processes of Yoga must be preceded by anticipation based on approximation. J. Krishnamurti describes all disciplines as 'cultivation of resistance'. This indeed is true so long as discipline has no right starting point in approximation. But once the right starting point is discovered in approximation with reference to any problem or situation there is born in man an initiative in terms of which discipline—or whatever other name we may give—is not cultivation of resistance but is conservation of energy. If acceleration is only speed without right direction it is sure to meet with resistances and the energy of man will be constantly used in breaking down these resistances. But when acceleration is in accordance with approximation or

right direction, then man will be intensely interested in conserving every ounce of his energy so that he may not break down on the path which he has discovered. It should be remembered that speed without direction is as much harmful in occultism as it is in science and technology. Acceleration based on anticipation and approximation will assuredly mean collaboration with Nature. It is in this collaboration that one can discover a consistent solution to the problems that arise from the great dual principles. Truly does *The Voice of the Silence* say

“Help Nature and work on with her; and Nature will regard thee as one of her creators and make obeisance. And she will open wide before thee the portals of her secret chambers, lay bare before thy gaze the treasures hidden in the very depths of her pure virgin bosom. Unsullied by the hand of matter, she shows her treasures only to the eye of Spirit—the eye which never closes, the eye for which there is no veil in all her kingdoms.

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